AUGUST 1988

COMMODORE USER

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HAWKEYE
IT'S NO TURKEY!

NINJA 2
THE C.U. REVIEW
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CARRIER COMMAND

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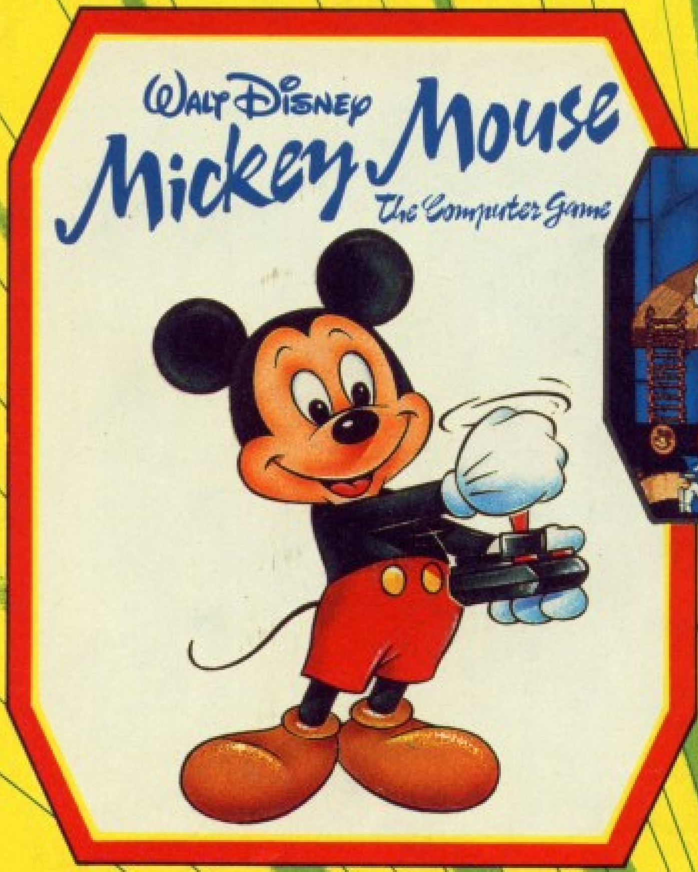
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unleashed upon his world – FIRE
BREATHING LIONS, GIANT BATS,
SNAKES, LIVING SKELETONS and the
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RASTAN THE WARRIOR KING.
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"RASTAN SAGA IS GOOD
ENTERTAINING STUFF AND
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ARCADE FIENDS GOING
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Always ahead of their time

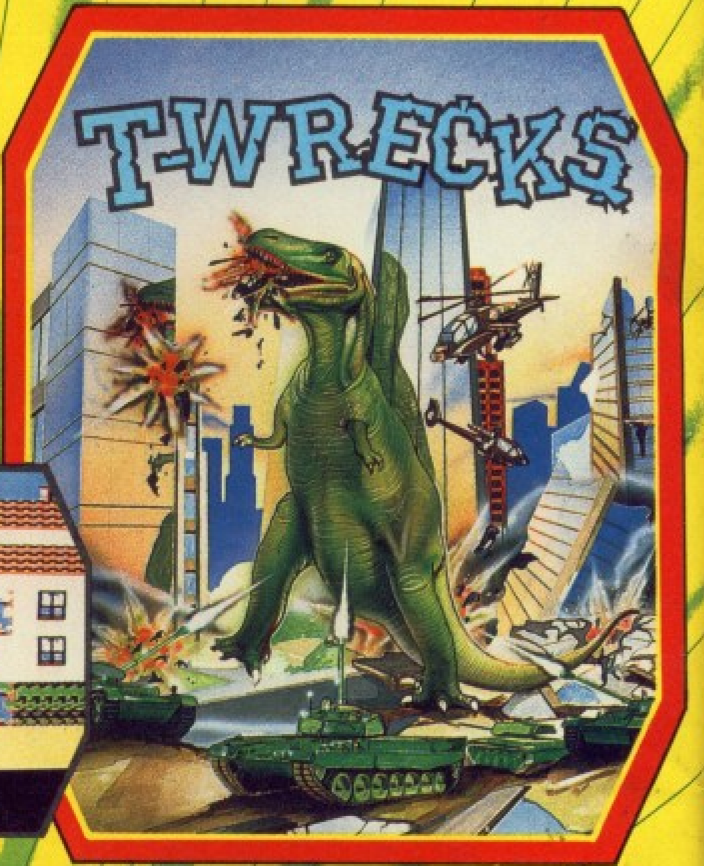


Screen shot from Atari ST version





Screen shot from CBM 64/128 version



CBM 64/128 **£9.99** c – **£14.99** d
Amstrad **£9.99** c – **£14.99** d
Spectrum **£7.99** c – **£12.99** d
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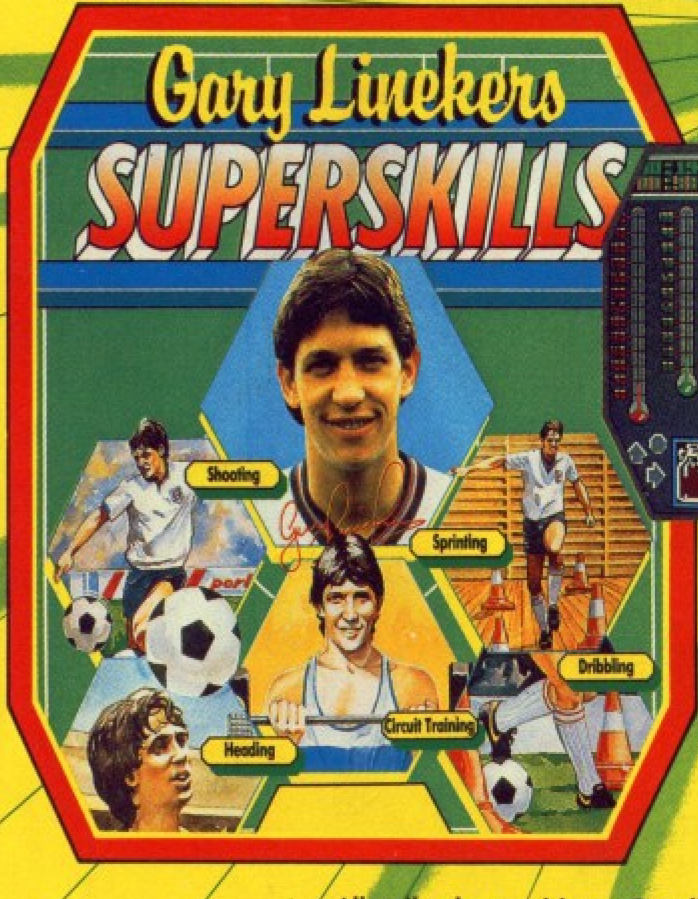
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Screen shot from Atari ST version





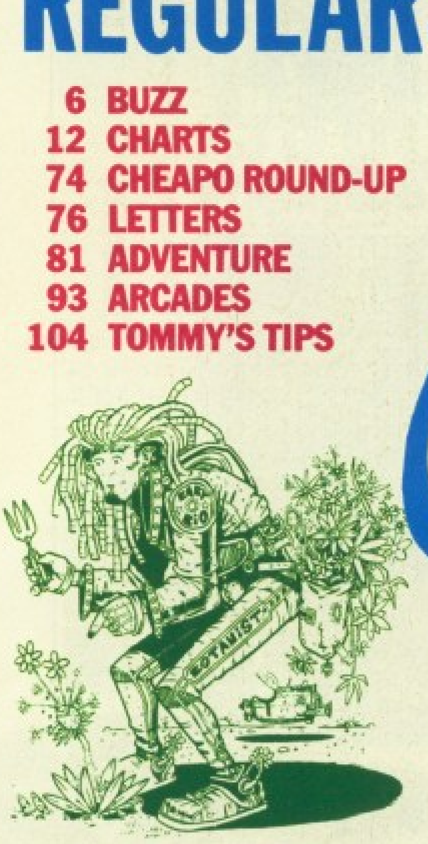
Screen shot from Amstrad version



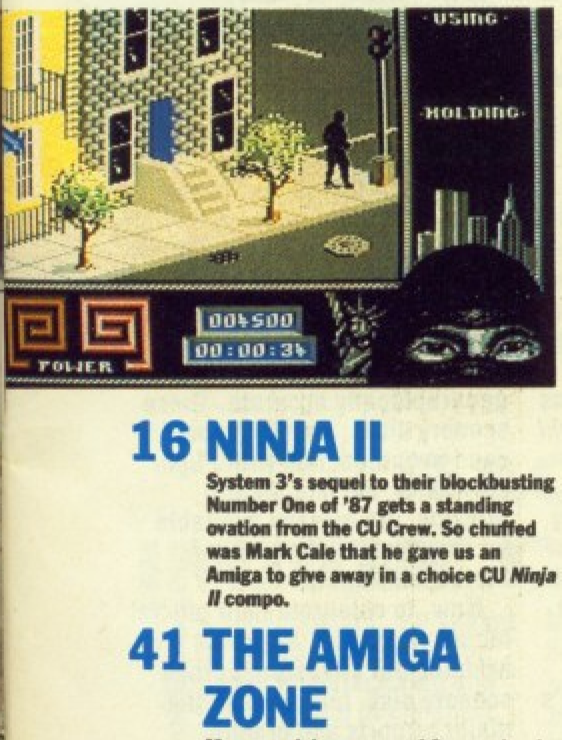
All mail order enquiries to: Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS.

CU Contents

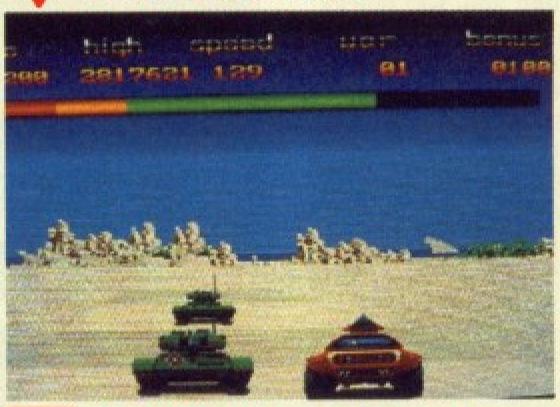
REGULARS



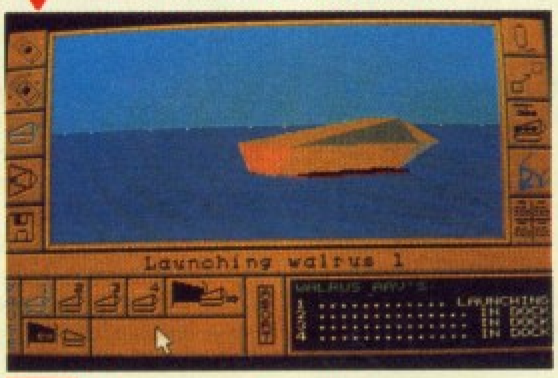
SPECIALS



Fire And Forget — *blasted!*



Carrier Command — *first landing!*



Zoom — *squared up to!*

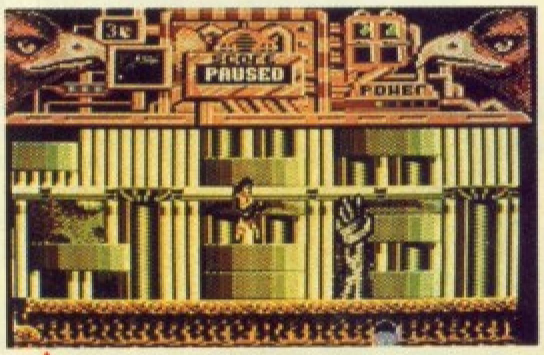


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Cover Illustration: Philip Bond

REVIEWS



Ikari Warriors — *captured!*



Hawkeye — *armed and dangerous!*

ABC
68,368
Jul-Dec 1987
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Barbarian II — *the axeman cometh!*



BUZZ



BITMAP BROTHERS FOR IMAGE WORKS

As predicted in last month's Buzz, Mirrorsoft are to launch a new, high profile games label. This new label, which will be called Image Works, has already scored a major coup by engaging the services of the famous Bitmap Brothers, the team responsible for Mastertronic's 'Get Fresh'-featured smash *Xenon.* The Bitmaps (pictured left alongside Robert "The Bouncing Czech" Maxwell's private helicopter) have combined a spaceage sports event with shoot 'em up-style power-ups and the kind of high-tech metallic graphics and sound which Xenon and 'Get Mucky' fans have come to know and love to produce *Speedball,* which will be released this Autumn.

The first Image Works product to reach the public, however, will be the Amiga version of an impressive-looking flight-sim-cum-two-player-interactive-shoot-'em-up, *Sky Chase.* With a choice of a range of aircraft, from F-15s to MiG 31s, and breathtaking speed, this should receive plenty of attention on its release in August. The programmers are a young US crew by name of Maxis.

In total Image Works are planning to release some 18 products in its first year of operation, other forthcoming titles including *Foxx Fights Back* programmed by Denton Design, *Fernandez Must Die* by Tony Crowther and David Bishop, and an abstract puzzle game, *Bomboozal,* featuring the combined programming talents of the aforementioned Bishop and Crowther, long-lost llama-loving hippy Jeff Minter, the infamous Silverbird supremo Ubik, Graftgold's Andrew Braybrook and Jon *"Head Over Heels"* Ritmann.



SUBLOGIC FLY IN

Top American flight sim specialist company SubLogic, whose products have up until now only been available through import, are to launch the European wing of their operation this Autumn with a stand at the PC Show.

To date their best known sims are the massively popular *Flight Simulator*, the less pricey and more inexperienced-user-friendly *Jet*, and, most recently, a sim based upon the new Stealth Fighter recently put into operation by the USAF, *Stealth Mission.*

But perhaps the most innovative feature of SubLogic's operation has been the development of a whole range of 'scenery disks' to accompany their sims. These disks, which are run in conjunction with the sims, allow the player to go through simulated flight action over specific areas, with the 'scenery' below being geographically accurate. These scenery disks, which can be used in conjunction with *Flight Simulator, Jet* and *Stealth Mission*, are already available for the whole of the United States and Japan.

Now, to celebrate their official launch in Europe, SubLogic are bringing out a Western Europe scenery disk, featuring all the major airports and graphic representations of all the major cities and their landmarks, and, by way of a special bonus, giving you the chance to retrace the steps of the famour 19-year old German amateur pilot, Mathias Rust, who flew his light Cessna through all the Warsaw Pact defence systems to land in Red Square in May of last year. Well, it'll certainly be safer than trying the real thing: though Mathias emerged unscathed, the Russian courts totally failed to see the funny side and sentenced him to four years in a Soviet prison.

THE BOY LINEKER (AGAIN)

Gremlin sure are getting value for the money they spent securing the endorsement of England international soccer star Gary Lineker. First there was *Superstar Soccer,* launched towards the end of last year. Then, following close behind, there was Gremlin's first ever board game of the same name.

Now, somewhat appropriately in view of the England team's less than inspiring performance in Germany, you get a chance to brush up your skills in yet another Gaz/Gremlin tie-up, *Gary Lineker's Super Skills.* Effectively a training programme, your pulse and energy are continually monitored as you work through a set of exhausting routines involving gym workouts, ball juggling and field work. With three difficulty levels, rest breaks and glucose guzzling to account for all levels of skill and fitness, *Gary Lineker's Super Skills* will be on your local softshelves this month. Ataboy, Gaz, you show us how!

MEDIAGENIC DROP DREAM GAMES

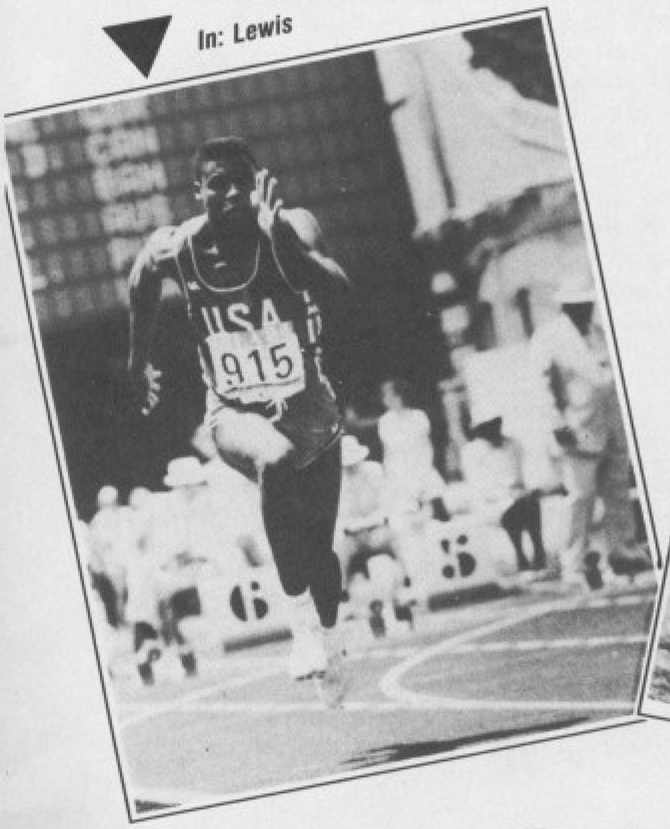
In a shock development, Mediagenic/Activision have announced that they won't now be releasing their licensed conversion of psychedelic coin-op shoot 'em up, *Lock On.* This is the second major coin-op licence which has failed to appear from Activision — there is still no sign of their long-overdue 64 version of *Super Hang-On.* In both cases the programming house involved in the conversion work was Southampton-based Electric Dreams.

The decision to drop *Lock-On* came after a review of the work-in-progress to date. According to an Activision spokesperson, "basically the 64 version wasn't fast enough, and it just wouldn't have been an economic proposition to continue working on it. It just didn't look like it was going to be up to standard without a lot more time and money being invested in it."

The company felt that they had no option other than to scrap the game.

"Though we're obviously very disappointed to have to shelve a game, it just wasn't coming together on play test. And, frankly, it's a lot better than releasing sub-standard product. After all, play testers are ultimately there to stop consumers from being ripped off".

In: Lewis



Out: Owen



RACE IMAGE CHANGE

Code Masters, the budget house responsible for the manufacturing and marketing of the Sport Aid '88 computer game *The Race Against Time*, have had to change the packaging and promoting of the game due to objections by representatives of the estate of Jesse Owen.

Advertising and packaging for various versions of the game already released featured the famous pre-war American athlete, but it subsequently transpired that no permission had been received from the estate of Jesse Owen for the use of his likeness in connection with the marketing of *The Race Against Time,* owing to an oversight. According to Code Masters' Bruce Everiss dealings between the two parties were amicable and the Owen family appreciated that the mistake had been a genuine one.

Code Masters have now confirmed that all future packaging and publicity for *The Race Against Time* will instead feature another outstanding black American athlete of more recent vitage, Carl Lewis, who has offered his services free for the charity.

This development has caused still further delays in the release of a 64 version of the game. Everiss could not give an exact release date but promised that the game would definitely be released "well before" the Sport Aid '88 run on September 11.

BUZZ

Sticks Of Joy: In the wake of our joystick feature a couple of weeks ago, we've been deluged with all manner of blasting implements. A couple that have particularly caught our eye come from Powerplay, with variable wagglability (v. useful for adjusting control when playing games which require a delicate touch). The end of August should see the release of two models from their Cruiser range, a standard one for a penny under a tenner, and a classy see-through plastic blaster with "instant autofire" for three quid more.

Psyclapse Oops: In our review of *Draconia* last ish, we attributed the game to Psygnosis, when in fact this cheeky 16-bit shoot 'em up will be appearing on Psygnosis's newly launched Psyclapse label. And to add insult to injury, we stated that the price was £24.95 rather than £19.95. Many apologies to all concerned. Oh, and by the way, Psygnosis/Psyclapse have also asked us to mention that they've now changed the product's name, and it will be called *Menace* rather than *Draconia,* apparently because it's come to their attention that Zeppelin Software have already got a game called *Draconia.*

Fastloading: Good news for 64 owners who don't like waiting for their 'snail-speed' drives to load their disks. Trilogic have just announced the release of the 'Rocket'. Used in conjunction with their Expert cartridge, it's possible to load a 200 block file in under 10 seconds, 25 times the normal speed! Impatient Amiga owners needn't miss out either, as Robtek have just released the Magnum Turbo. At £24.95 it's capable of speeding up your drive by 3 to 5 times. Wowza!

PEPSI

THUNDERBLADE CHALLENGE



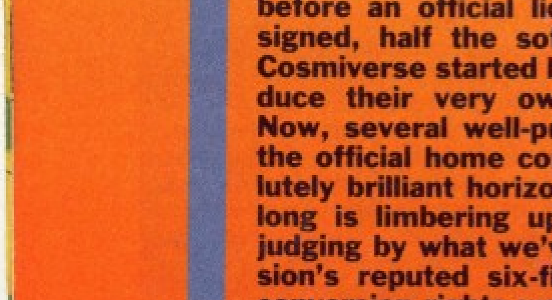
What do Michael Jackson and Sega's wonderous chopper blast 'em up *Thunderblade* have in common? Well, apart from their both being pretty hot movers, both are the subject of a massive sponsorship/promotions push by Pepsi. Though details were scant at the time of going to press, it has been confirmed that an agreement has been concluded between US Gold, who have recently acquired the home conversion rights to the fab coin-op, and the huge American soft drinks company, whereby Pepsi will be sponsoring a competition called "The Pepsi Challenge" in which all comers get to try and beat the high score on The Pepsi Game Of The Year (*Thunderblade,* natch) for big prizes. The Pepsi Challenge will be taking place at this September's PC Show, where a special booth will be located on US Gold's stand. And Wacko? Well we're not sure whether he'll be playing *Thunderblade* in public as part of the deal, but with his tour packing 'em in all over the UK at the minute, you'll probably be seeing enough of him anyhow.

BUZZ



R-TYPE

So popular was the coin-op original that before an official licence had even been signed, half the software houses in the Cosmiverse started beavering away to produce their very own *R-Type* derivative. Now, several well-publicised clones later, the official home conversion of this absolutely brilliant horizontally-scrolling blastalong is limbering up for a release. And, judging by what we've seen so far, Activision's reputed six-figure pay-out for the conversion rights won't have been wasted — this one should be MASSIVE. Never mind the writs, as they say, feel the quality.



EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

Though it may come as a surprise to some of you youngsters, Emlyn Hughes wasn't always a cheeky wee Scouse talking head on your TV screen. No, indeed our Emlyn was once a rather wonderful footie player, which presumably is why Audiogenic snapped up the rights to use his name on their new football game. And, surprise, surprise, the demo we've seen looks like the business. We thought we'd seen our fill of soccer games, but the slick controls of *EHIS*, which manage to be both realistic and easy to grasp, really do put this update of Commodore's fab *International Soccer* into, erm, a different league. Expect to see this in the shops in late September.



RED STORM RISING

Those who enjoyed Argus' *Hunt For Red October* will be interested to hear of the impending release of *Red Storm Rising*. For, though the company involved this time is Microprose, both games are based on best-selling novels by gung-ho American author Tom Clancy and both, coincidentally, involve the adventures of nuclear submarines. In the Argus game, the sub in question was a defecting Russian vessel, here it's an Apple-pie American one charged with locating and destroying Warsaw Pact enemies in a projected World War III. *Red Storm Rising* features sonar, computerised databases and homing torpedoes. Sounds scrummy!



AQUABLAST

Perhaps it's the time of year, but there's a distinctly nautical flavour to a lot of the games making their way onto our desk this ish. Well, here's another, this time from Elite. According to the accompanying bumpf, you and your trusty jetboat have to take part in three missions to retrieve the three H-bombs stolen by the fiendish boss of S.M.E.A.R., Drago, and hidden about the globe. You'll have to strafe boats, planes, helicopters, minefields, subs and gunposts on your way through the three missions, set respectively in Norwegian Fjords, the Persian Gulf and South American rivers. Great — there's nothing we enjoy more than messing about in boats. Release date is provisionally set for the beginning of October.

OPERATION WOLF

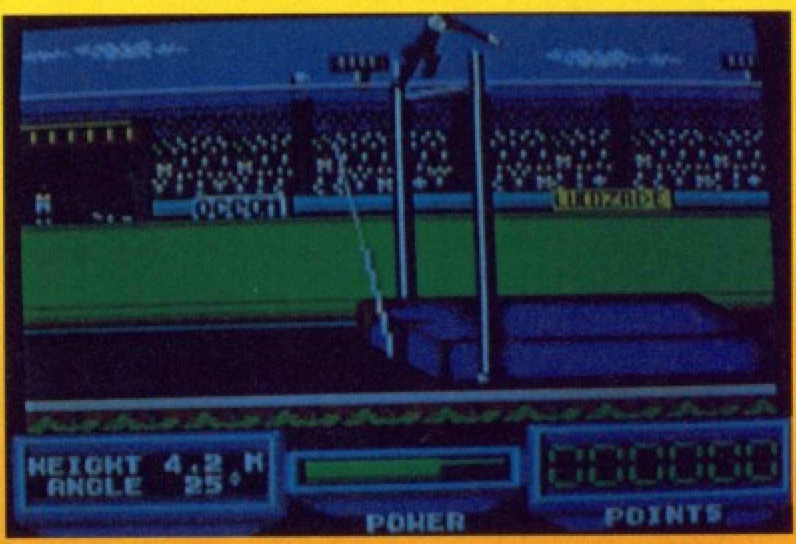
This is the game that the Mean Ed went ape over when it was released in the arcades early this year, mainly due to the replica Uzi machine gun mounted on the console. Although many have said that the original's superb graphics and sound would be impossible to convert, Ocean snapped up the rights and all the versions seem to be shaping up well, particularly the Amiga, as initial reports indicate that the graphics are 100% identical to the coin-op! Whether or not the absence of the Uzi will seriously damage the gameplay remains to be seen, but as far as we're concerned, it could well turn out to be the biggest seller of the year.



SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

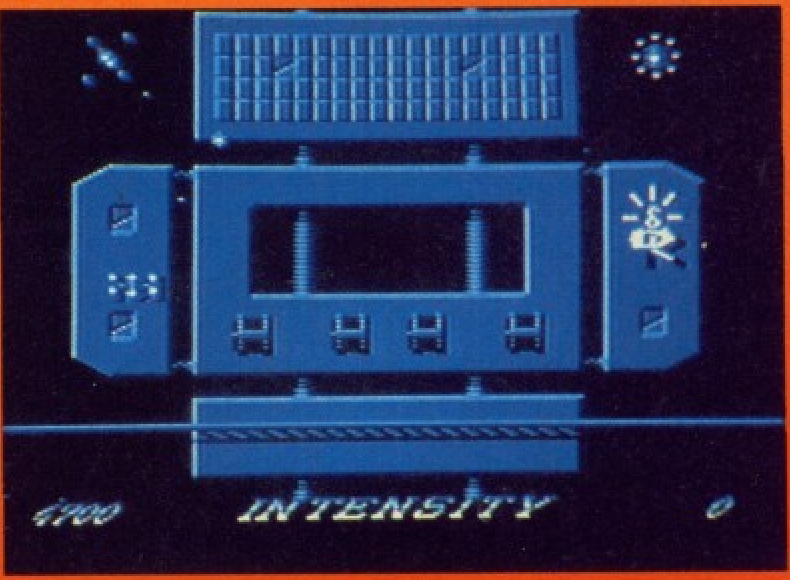
From the keyboards of Graftgold this month comes John Cumming's *Soldier of Fortune*, a strange mixture of platform and arcade adventure. In the role of the hero, Tartarus, your mission is to find and return the 'Zodiac Power Source' to your home cottage and restore order to your evil-ridden village. In his quest, Tartarus can walk, crawl, jump, climb and open doors to get around the village. Shops are littered around the village where he can bargain with the owner in order to gain extra weapons and powers, which he'll need in order to combat the elemental demons and monsters that lurk in the deeper, darker parts of the village. *Soldier Of Fortune* is set for a mid-October release, so expect to see it featured on Firebird's stand at the PC(W) this year.





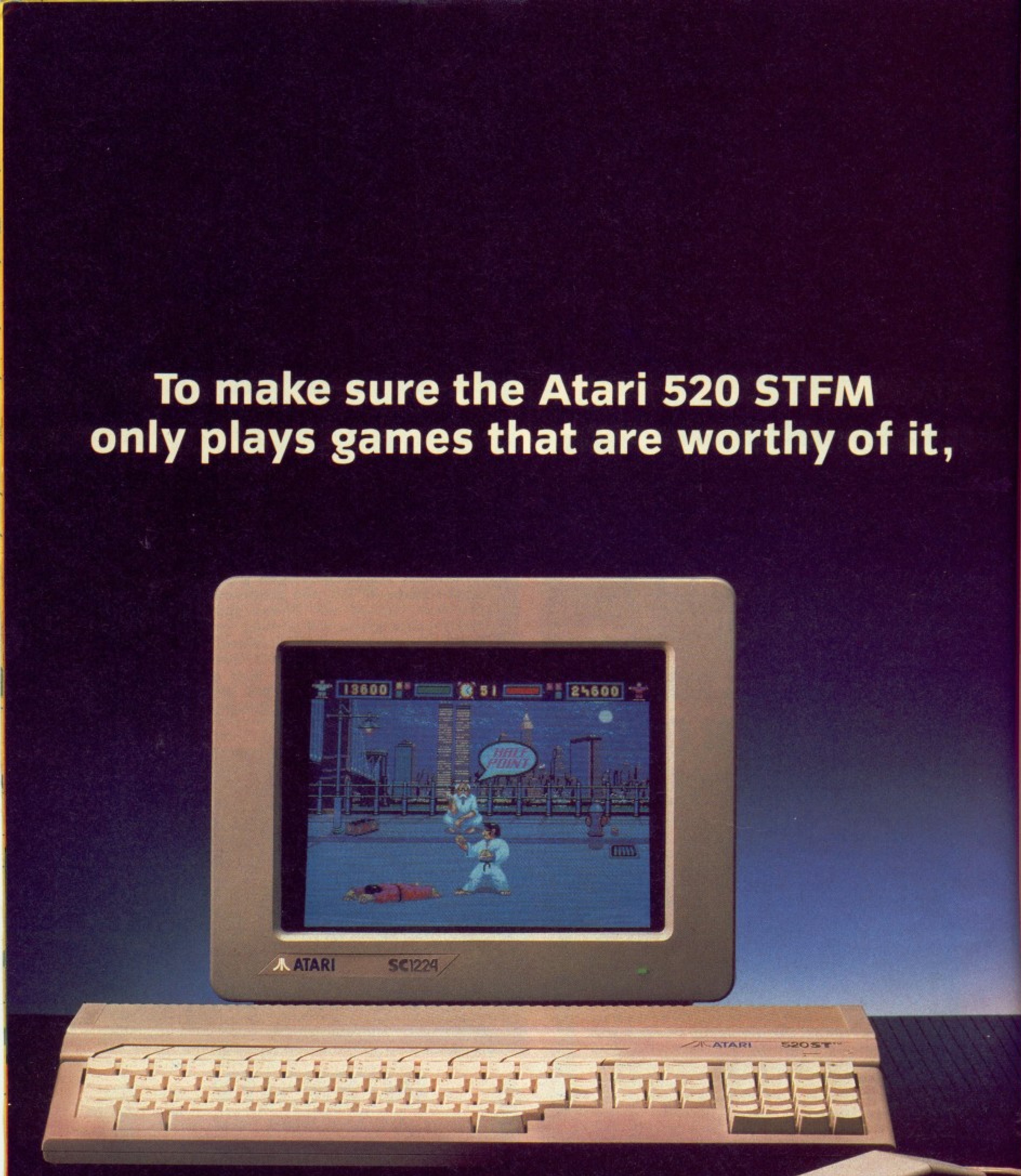
DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

Set to coincide with the Olympic Games in Seoul later this year is Ocean's latest endeavour, *Daley Thompson's Olympic Challenge*. Rumoured to be Ocean's biggest release of '88, and endorsed by both the man himself and Adidas sportsware, the finished game will contain ten 'gruelling' events and training sessions, used to build up Daley's athleticism for events such as the discus, shot putt, high and long jumps and hurdles. Daley will be pumpin' iron and pullin' muscles sometime in August.



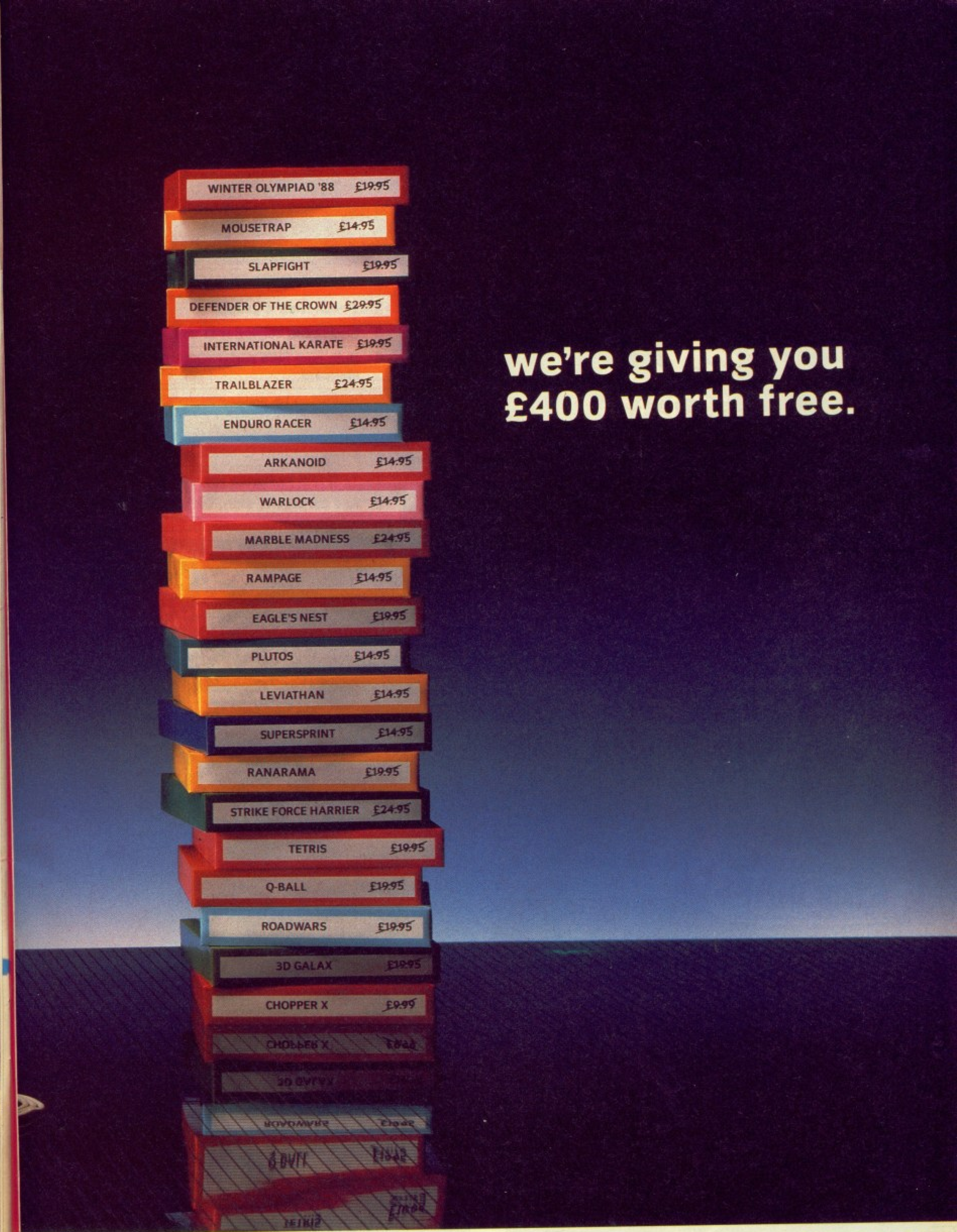
INTENSITY

Nothing has been heard from much-worshipped programming team Graftgold (AKA Andrew Braybrook and Steve Turner) since they defected from Hewson to join Firebird some time ago. So what, you may ask, have they been working on since then? The answer is *Intensity*. Set in deep space in the far future, the plot has you rescuing colonists from a space station under siege and transporting them to escape shuttles and safety, by moving them about using a remote control drone while defending yourself with a surface skimmer. By rescuing the allotted number of colonists, you can progress to the next level. It looks like *Uridium* and will supposedly have *Morpheus*-like strategy elements. It looks like it could be *very* big . . .



Offer excludes monitor.

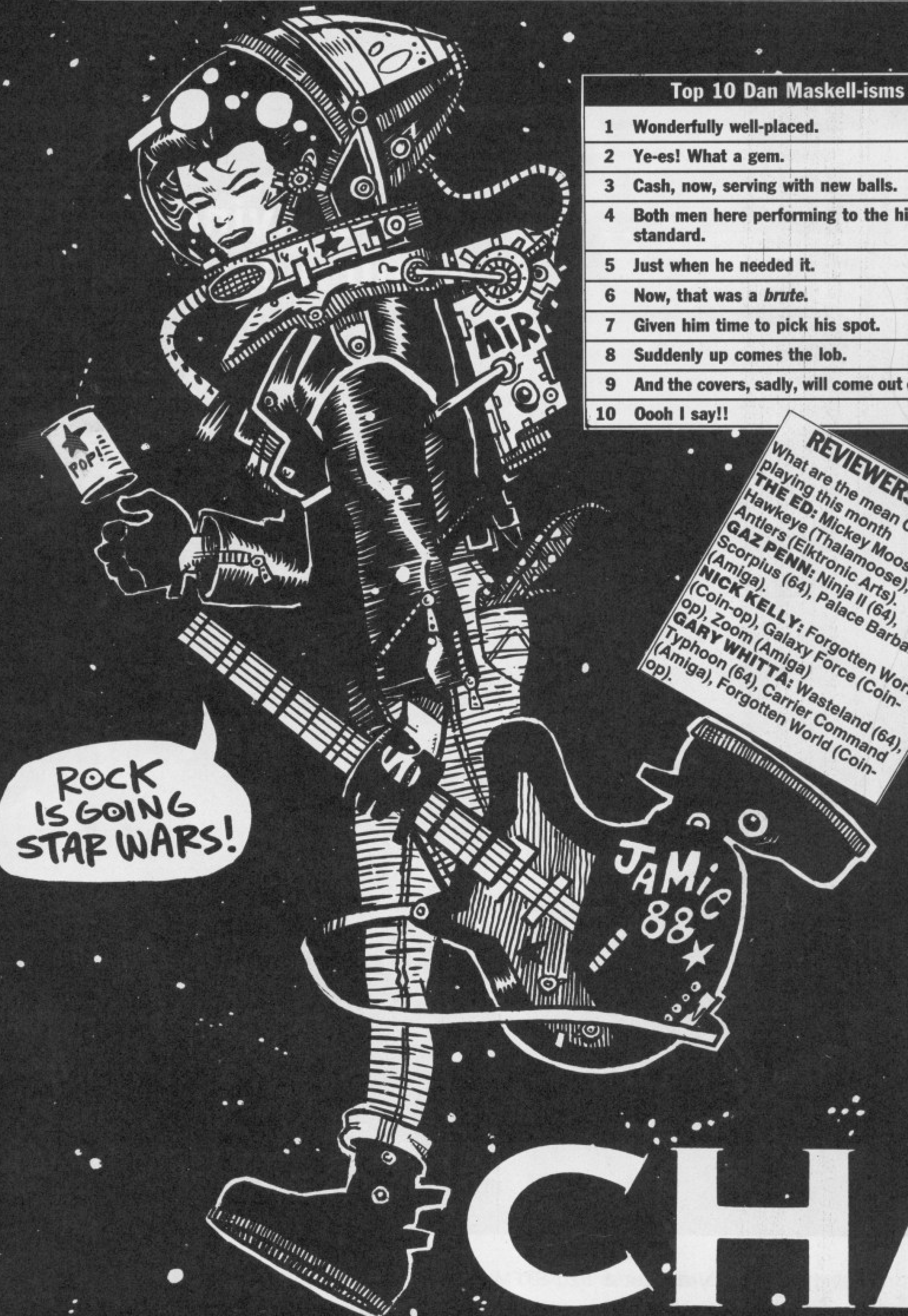
Only the Atari Summer Pack gives you the world's best home computer plus the world's best games. Twenty-two software titles that most people would give their right arms for, are yours absolutely free.



There's no catch. You really do get a 520 STFM and £414 worth of great games for just £399.99! But only until September 1st. What are you waiting for?

ATARI®
SUMMER PACK

Budget software is still ruling supreme this month, with 12 of this month's top 20's sellers all being cheapos, and five of those claiming the top slots. *Steve Davis Snooker* still refuses to be toppled by other up-and-coming cheapies *ACE*, *Yogi Bear* and the infamous *Ghostbusters*. On the full price side *Bionic Commando* sneaks in at the bottom, while *Target Renegade* and *Pacland* begin to slip slowly downwards, along with *Impossible mission II*. Excellent budget R-Type clone *Scorpius* should make an appearance soon too, but the ones to watch out for are *Typhoon* and *Last Ninja II*, both looking set to bust the charts wide open. Unsurprisingly, *Interceptor* has toppled *Obliterator* to take the number one Amiga spot, while *Football Manager II*, *Peter Beardsley*, *Black Lamp* and the billiant *Buggy Boy* (Gaz Whitta is still playing it) all make first time appearances. *Ikari Warriors* looks set to appear in the top ten soon, but the smart money is going on *Carrier Command* to go straight in at No.1. Adventurewise, it's pleasing to see both *Bard's Tale* I and II taking the two top positions, and if the RPG trend continues, we could well see the splendiferous *Wasteland* up there before too long.



Top 10 Dan Maskell-isms	
1	Wonderfully well-placed.
2	Ye-es! What a gem.
3	Cash, now, serving with new balls.
4	Both men here performing to the highest standard.
5	Just when he needed it.
6	Now, that was a *brute*.
7	Given him time to pick his spot.
8	Suddenly up comes the lob.
9	And the covers, sadly, will come out once more.
10	Oooh I say!!

REVIEWERS CHOICE

What are the mean CU Crew playing this month

THE ED: Mickey Moose (64), Hawkeye (Thalamoose), Return to Antlers (Elktronic Arts).

GAZ PENN: Ninja II (64), Scorpius (64), Palace Barbarian (Amiga).

NICK KELLY: Forgotten World (Coin-op), Galaxy Force (Coin-op), Zoom (Amiga)

GARY WHITTA: Wasteland (64), Typhoon (64), Carrier Command (Amiga), Forgotten World (Coin-op).

CHA

C64 CHART

TM	LM		
1	4	BARDS TALE 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS
2	RE	BARDS TALE	ELECTRONIC ARTS
3	1	JACK THE RIPPER	CRL
4	2	MICRO MUD	VIRGIN
5	2	GUILD OF THEIVES	RAINBIRD
6	RE	DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	MIRRORSOFT
7	RE	KOBYASHI NARU	MASTERTRONIC
8	RE	JEWELS OF DARKNESS	RAINBIRD
9	RE	RETURN TO EDEN	LEVEL 9
10	3	INHERITANCE	INFOGRAMES

AMIGA CHART

TM	LM		
1	10	INTERCEPTOR	ELECTRONIC ARTS
2	2	AAARGH	MELBOURNE HOUSE
3	1	OBLITERATOR	PSYGNOSIS
4	NE	FOOTBALL MANAGER 2	ADDICTIVE
5	8	THE THREE STOOGES	MIRRORSOFT
6	7	FERRARI FORMULA 1	ELECTRONIC ARTS
7	NE	PETER BEARDSLEY'S FOOTBALL	GRAND SLAM
8	6	SIDEWINDER	MASTERTRONIC
9	NE	BLACK LAMP	FIREBIRD
10	NE	BUGGY BOY	ELITE

C64 CHART

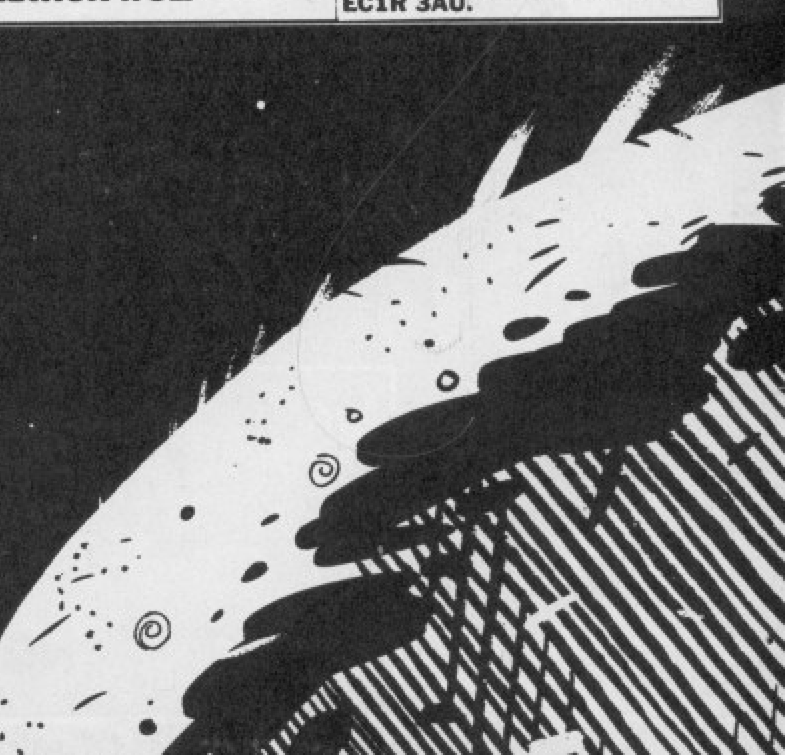
TM	LM		
1	1	STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER	BLUE RIBBON
2	9	ACE	CASCADE
3	4	YOGI BEAR	ALTERNATIVE
4	5	GHOSTBUSTERS	MASTERTRONIC
5	NE	FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING	ENCORE
6	2	TARGET RENEGADE	IMAGINE
7	NE	BRUCE LEE	AMERICANA
8	6	WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST	MASTERTRONIC
9	NE	EUROPEAN FIVE A SIDE	FIREBIRD
10	NE	ALIEN SYNDROME	ACE
11	8	PAC-LAND	QUICKSILVA
12	7	IMPOSSIBLE MISSION 2	EPYX
13	NE	BEACH BUGGY SIMULATOR	FIREBIRD
14	3	WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS	OCEAN
15	NE	RALLY DRIVER	ALTERNATIVE
16	11	FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
17	18	OUT RUN	SEGA-US GOLD
18	RE	KONAMI'S ARCADE COLLECTION	IMAGINE
19	14	SHANGHAI KARATE	PLAYERS
20	NE	BIONIC WOMAN	GO!

READERS COIN-OP CHART

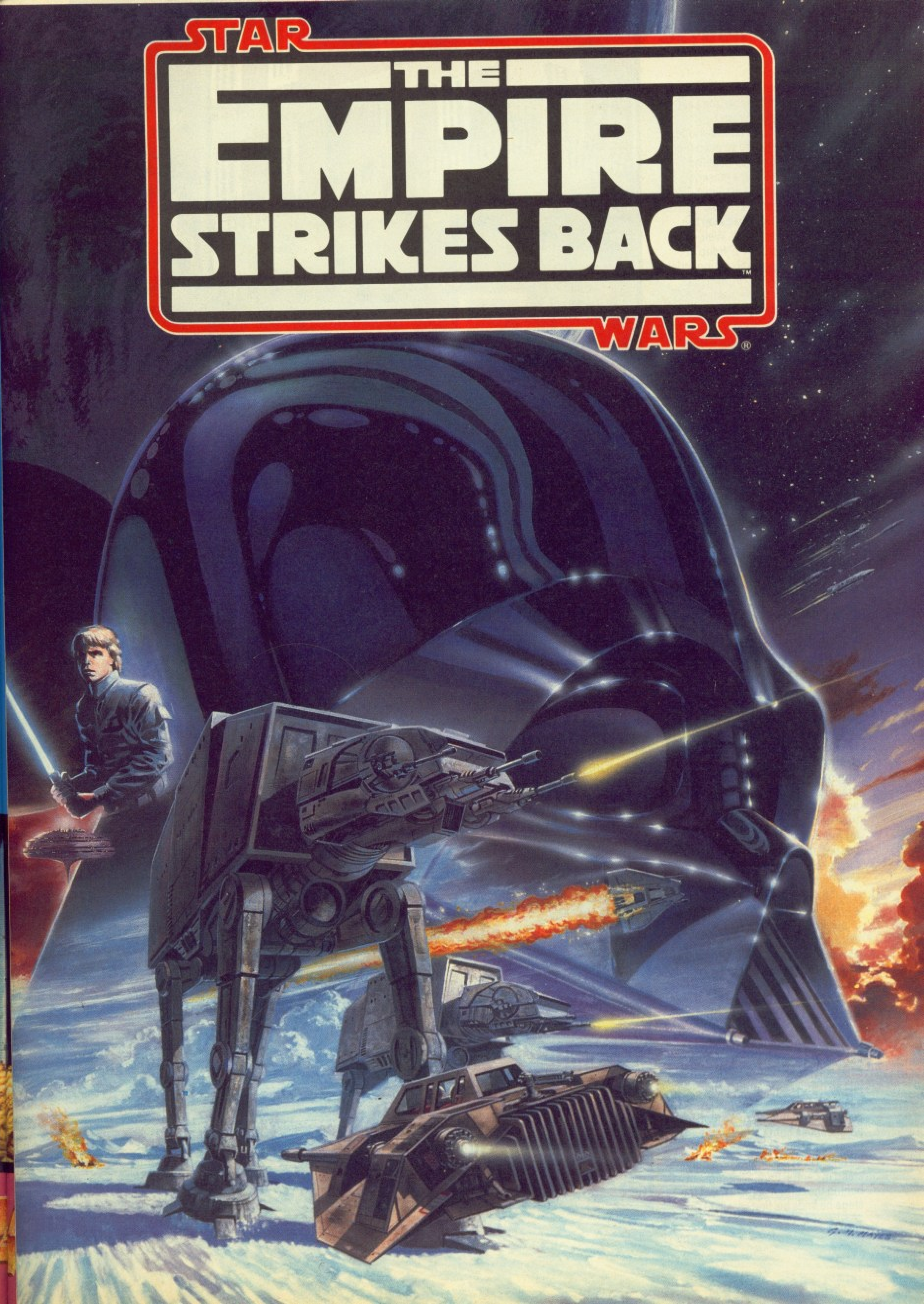
TM	LM	
1	1	AFTERBURNER
2	3	DOUBLE DRAGON
3	2	OUT RUN
4	4	R-TYPE
5	NE	OPERATION WOLF

Wow! No change at the top, but for the first time in about a decade (well, quite a long time, anyhow) *Out Run* is out of the top two, usurped by *Double Dragon*. And, more significantly, *Operation Wolf* has crept — if anything with a mounted Uzi sub-machine gun can "creep" — into our top five. Keep your charts coming in to Readers Coin-op Chart, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

ARTS




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STAR
THE
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WARS

Having put paid to the evil Shogun Kunitoki, the Last Ninja finds himself transported through time to modern day Manhattan where an even more despicable re-incarnation of the Shogun is controlling a massive drugs ring. Only the Last Ninja, made as he is from yer actual oriental ninja magic, can stop the Shogun once and for all. Well, provided he can fight 'n' fump 'n' fink his way through six action-laden loads first . . .

Almost a year in the making, System 3's stupendous sequel to their smash of '87 is almost upon us. On the 29th of August you too can experience the thrills and spills of the game which is currently sending the CU Crew crazy with delight. Once again programmer John



Groin-busting giggles in downtown Manhattan.

NINJA

System 3
Price:
£12.99 Cass
£14.99 Disk

Twiddy is in the driving seat, with aimiable artistic assistance from that binary Botticelli Hugh Riley and super sonics courtesy of ex-Compunet maestro Matt Gray. And what a crucial combination! As unbelievable as it may sound this talented trio has actually managed to improve on the basic theme of the original in every aspect; the graphics are impressively colourful and incredibly detailed — more so than before, while the gameplay is far more involved, with loads of puzzles and plenty of boss fighting fun to keep you at it for many many months to come.

But there's MORE! Honestly. If you were wondering about the price tag, wonder no longer . . . for the extra dosh doesn't just cover the cost of a brill game, oh no. *Ninja II* is exquisitely packaged with a highly readable 30-page instruction booklet, an authentic ninja scroll, a well-nifty ninja mask made from durable ninja cotton (so you can act out your favourite ninja fantasies) PLUS a supa-swish (not to mention safe) soft rubber shuriken star which just so happens to double for a posey place mat. When you buy *Ninja II* you're buying more than just another ninja game. It's a landmark in computer entertainment.

Ninja's mission begins on a band stand in Central Park. Slipping behind the curtain at the back of the stage he finds his first assailant — a mugger spoiling for a spot of fisticuffs. Not to worry, an experienced ninja such as yourself can soon make small change of this foolish fellow. But wait! What's this? He's getting back up on his feet! Yes, this time around your opponents don't stay down, it takes three thorough trouncings to put them out for good which makes the fighting side all the more entertaining.

With the thug out of the way, ninja notices a suspicious-looking panel protruding from the wall. And being endowed with more brawn than brain, decides to punch it — only to see it disappear into the wall. Coo. Returning to the stand ninja notices a large hole — a trapdoor has opened. A-ha! Quick as a flash he



Use the boat as a stepping stone.

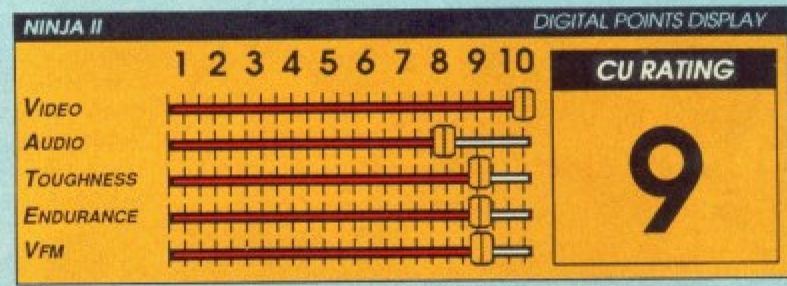




Ninja's found a useful object.

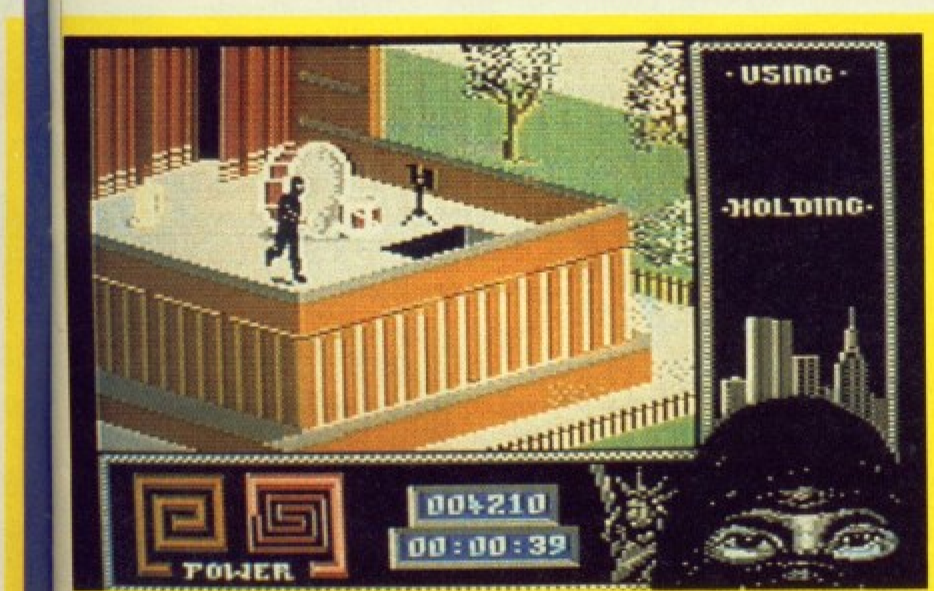


Explore the plush interior of the Shogun's offices.





Punch this . . .



. . . to open this!

descends and the adventure begins proper . . . But how does he cross the wide stream to access the second load? And how does he get past the knife-wielding juggler? Then there's the swarms of bent policemen, muggers and killer bees to contend with, along with precarious gaps to leap and rivers to cross. But what about a weapon? Nunchukas always come in handy — provided you can find a pair . . . or at least make a pair.

The second load has ninja walking through the maze-like streets of Manhattan, occupied by more muggers and policemen, winos, deadly ninja flower-pot throwers and speed-crazy bikers. Find a useful object or two, open a manhole and descend to the sewer network beneath the streets, and the third load. Rats, alligatas and zombies (workmen mutated by the bizarre mix of chemicals found in the water) attack the ninja at every available opportunity. But he finds an exit and our intrepid hero appears in the Shogun's opium production plant, guarded by a vicious panther and a hoard of his henchmen. A lift provides the means to escape and access to Load Five — above the warehouse. Hey, there's the Shogun, about to make his escape in his private chopper. Quick! Catch a ride to his mansion, the final load.

The ninja leaps from the chopper onto the roof of the mansion, and having gained access discovers an intricate security system to outwit, along with armed guards aplenty. Using his noddle and plenty of ninja violence he enters the Shogun's room and a confrontation from which there can only be one survivor . . .

There's so much more than before on offer, and with a score and timer to use for reference you can come back again and again and atempt to beat your previous best.

A bonus for disk owners is a save game option, and the fact that the disk version costs little more than the cassette makes *Ninja II* a definite cut above the rest — and that includes its illustrous predecessor. System 3 seem to have the immensely popular ninja market well and truly sewn up and it's difficult to see how they're going to top this one. Hearty congratulations are in order for what has to be the most professional and entertaining software package yet seen. Well done to all involved.

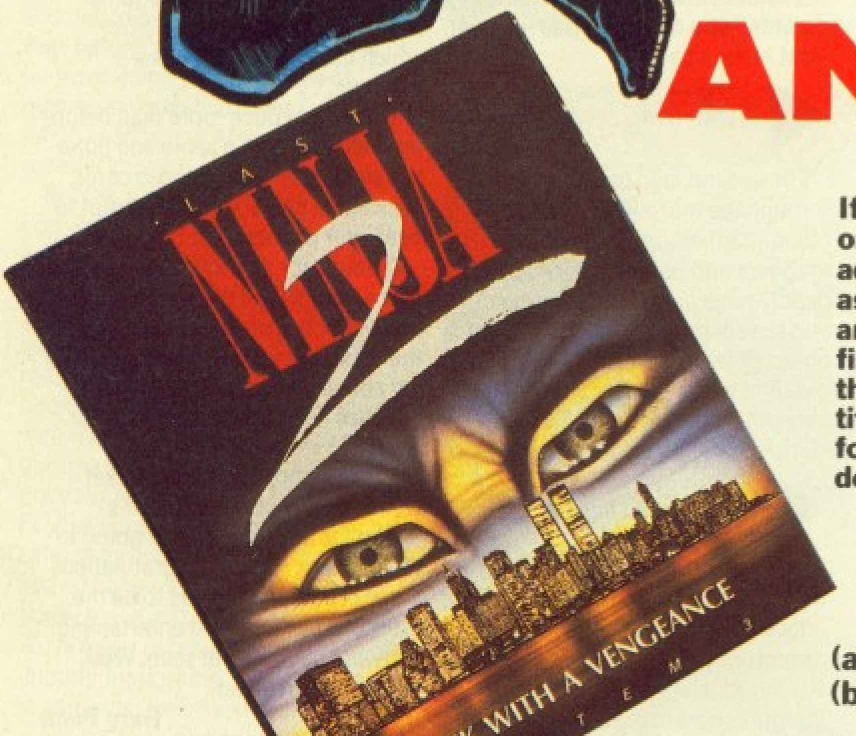
Gary Penn

NiNJA 2 compo



Tired? Irritable? Depressed? Well, if you're not now, you will be if you miss out on the answers to these easy-peasy brain teasers. Y'see, being generous to a fault, System 3 have donated one spanking new AMIGA to the lucky guy or gal who can answer correctly the aforementioned questions *and* manages to have their postcard delivered to Ninja Compo, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, *and* also contrives to have their card picked out of the sacred hat of Ed-Man first.

WIN AN AMIGA



If you can't arrange to be *that* lucky, you can still win one of twenty-five copies of this brilliant arcade adventure which System 3 has thoughtfully provided as runners-up prizes for the slightly less fortunate among you. And the teasers? Simple — here are four films which starred the late lamented Bruce Lee. Only thing is, we've cunningly replaced one word of each title with that ubiquitous beast of which we are all so fond of here in CU towers, the Moose. All you have to do is tell us the word we took out in each case:

(a) Enter The Moose
(b) The Way Of The Moose
(c) The Big Moose
(d) Moose Of Fury

CU COMPETITION





Spectrum Version



Amiga Version



C64 Version



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▶ *Not even close, I'm afraid, Brian.*

FOOTBALL[2] MANAGER

*F*ootball Manager was, and still is, one of the best selling games of all time. Now Kevin Toms and Co have bounced back with a sequel to what has been called 'the greatest football managerial game ever'. The question is, looking back now, was it? The answer, of course, is absolutely not. It was good for its time, but with the subsequent release of games like *Track-Suit Manager* and *Football Director 2* in particular, *FM* was overtaken. And sadly *FM2* isn't likely to reclaim the pole position.

The original *FM* was the only game of its type at the time. All it consisted of was an endless loop of six or seven screens, asking you if you wanted to buy or sell players, showing you a league table and giving you very badly drawn match highlights. *FM2* is, and it breaks my heart to say this, almost IDENTICAL to the original. All that seems to have been changed are the graphics and the fact that one extra screen has been added. ONE!

As before, you are the trainer, coach, accountant, club secretary, tea lady and cleaner, and it is your job to ensure that your team gets to the top of the division, gets promoted and wins the FA Cup. This is all done through a series of screens which contain, for the most part, Yes/No questions. Do you want to sell a player? Do you want to increase stand capacity? And so on.

Once you've made your long, weary way through the few choices available, you have to set up your team using a very confusing and tetchy control method which involves moving a pointer over a few black boxes and pressing fire, hoping you've selected the right player. The important thing, and I think that this is the only good idea that this game contains, is getting your marking right. A third of the pitch is displayed at a time, and on the pitch you can see the statistics of the oppostion that whichever player you put there is going to face: when you are placing attackers you can see the opposing defender's statistics. The basic moan with *FM2* is that the game is a 'strategy' game, but the marking is the only strategic bit, and that isn't really strategic enough to be called strategy. You dig?

After setting your men, you get to watch the edited highlights of the match in glorious Addictive-o-vision, which, though more realistic than the first attempt is still nothing much to look at, and do tend to take an extraordinary amount of time.

AMIGA

Layout of the game is the same as the Commodore 64 version with all the same choices and menus. The mouse control is appallingly bad, being unresponsive on the menu screens and far too responsive on the player selection screens. The highlight section is very poorly done, considering the capability of the machine, with some very bad animation, jerky and unrealistic ball responses, and the goalie moving like he suffers from epilepsy every time the ball enters the penalty area. Sound is very lame, one of the only effects being a dull "huuuuh" from the 'crowd' when a goal is scored.

A very big let down, as far as I'm concerned. Little or no improvement over the original, which results in the game being outdated, short lived and most of all, boring.

Tony Dillon

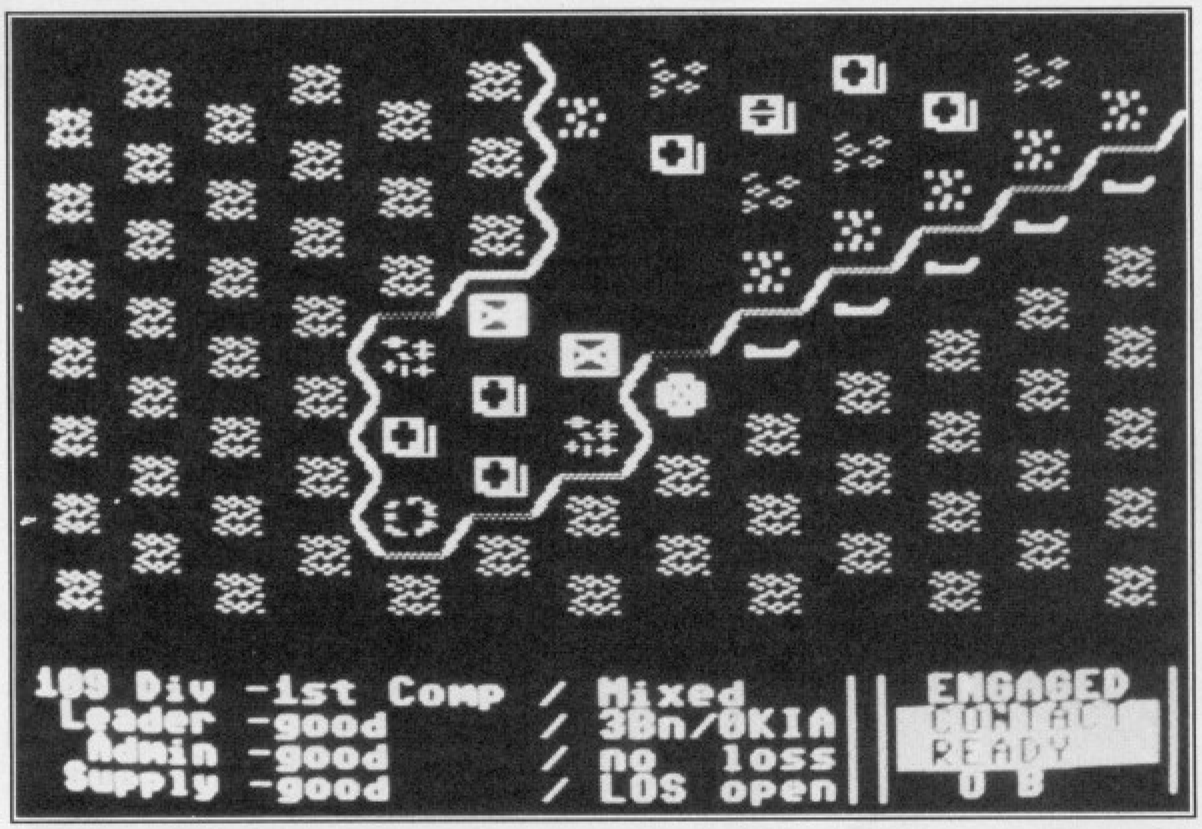
FOOTBALL MANAGER 2 — *DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING

2



would like to try out. The basic scenarios are as follows:

(1) Mexico City: Set in 1844, the allied forces have to fight out a little part of the war between USA and Mexico, the aim being to storm the city and take the Halls of Montezuma.

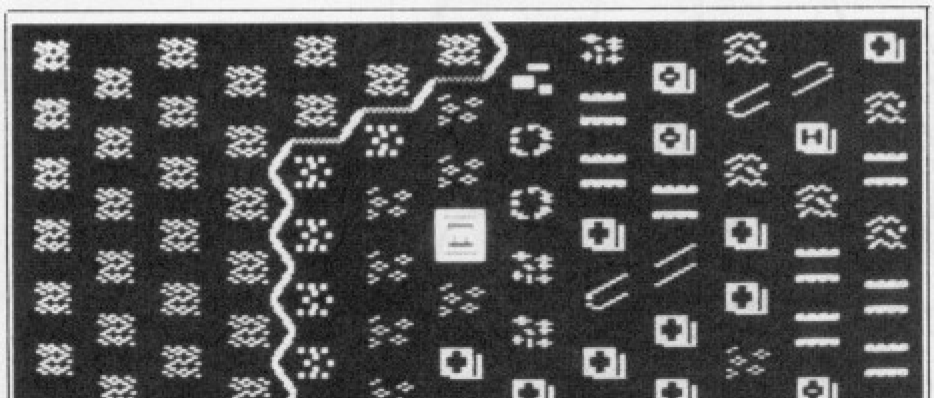
(2) Belleau Wood: Set in WW1, defend the wood with the cowardly French troops and hold out against the Germans until the US troops arrive, and then batter hell out of the Jerries.

(3) Iwo Jima: Set in 1945, get a large enough beach head, land your troops and take the island by force.

(4) Okinowa: Continuing from Iwo Jima, attack the shuri line and open the attack on Okinowa.

(5) Okinowa 2: Breach the final assault line and take the country.

Halls Of Montezuma



64/128
SSG
Price: £23.95 disk

The United States Marine Corps go back a long way. Right back to 1664. Since then they have had, naturally, some very interesting battles. Iwo Jima, for one, the Tet Offensive, for another. What *Halls of Montezuma* aims to do, and indeed does quite well, is to recreate some of the more important battles of the USMC, using SSG's now standard Battlefront wargaming system.

For the uninitated, *Battlefront* is a system designed for use in one of SSG's earlier attempts (also named *Battlefront*), probably to take over the over-complicated and extremely user-unfriendly systems adopted in titles such as *Carriers at War* and *Europe Ablaze*. It consisted of a series of interlinked branch, decision and single-function menus, with which you could quite easily set up a complicated battle plan whilst still knowing what the hell was going on. It was, in effect, very simple to use and a great success, and was used in further titles such as *Russia*, *Rommel* and *Battles in Normandy*, getting slightly better each time. Another system has been carried through all which the recent SSG release is the Warplan and Warpaint games and graphic designers. These are, in fact, total wargame construction sets, and are, unfortunately for SSI, for superior to the official Wargame Construction Set both in ease of use and flexibility.

As usual you have a choice of 1 or 2 players and whether you want to control the Allied (USMC) forces, or the Axis (any enemy) forces. After the usual changing of names and insertion of rude words it's into the main selection menu where you can choose between the basic scenarios that the game has to offer, or any you may have created yourself and

(6) Pusan: Set in 1950, you have to first remove the NKPA troops attacking you, and then take the villages of Sachon and Chinju.

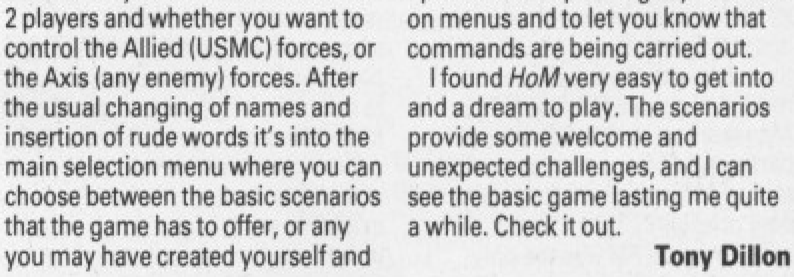
(7) Inchon: Set, once again, in 1950, you've to take the village of Yongdungp'o, clear the main airfield for the marine to land, and get the marines to the North Korean Government House.

(8) Hue: The US troops are now defensive and can do nothing but try and hold the city as the NVA pours in with superior mobility and some very unfair advantages.

As far as graphics and sound go, the game is identical to all the other SSG releases, with large maps made up of joined hexagons, a large, colourful icon depicting terrain, troops or mobilised forces and objectives in each. Sound is made up of basic beeps to signify selection on menus and to let you know that commands are being carried out.

I found *HoM* very easy to get into and a dream to play. The scenarios provide some welcome and unexpected challenges, and I can see the basic game lasting me quite a while. Check it out.

Tony Dillon




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The porky dungeon master chuckles at your impending doom.



BARBARIAN

THE DUNGEON OF DRAX

There can hardly be a 64 owner who doesn't remember the fuss made over Palace's last venture into the violent primaeval world of *Barbarian* – whether it be for the bloodshed or the breasts. Well, after a year's break, Miss Whittaker is back in the flesh, and the blood (albeit yellow) is flowing once more.

Barbarian II is set immediately after the successful defeat of the evil Drax, who has since fled to his secret sanctuary deep within the dungeons beneath his black castle. Selecting the character of either the barbarian warrior or princess Marina – who is also adept with a blade – the player follows Drax into his underground lair in order to seek out and destroy the wizard once and for all. . . or at least until *Barbarian III*.

Drax's inner sanctum is reached by negotiating three multi-loaded levels: the wastelands, the caverns and the dungeons themselves. Each level consists of approximately 28 screens, linked together to form a maze. The player's character is guided left and right and also through doorways which appear at the 'back' of the screen. Since the orientation of the next location alters when entered, a large sword constantly points north allowing the rooms to be mapped.

All three levels contain two magical objects which are vital for completion of the quest, providing improved resistance to harm, keys to unlock specific sections of the



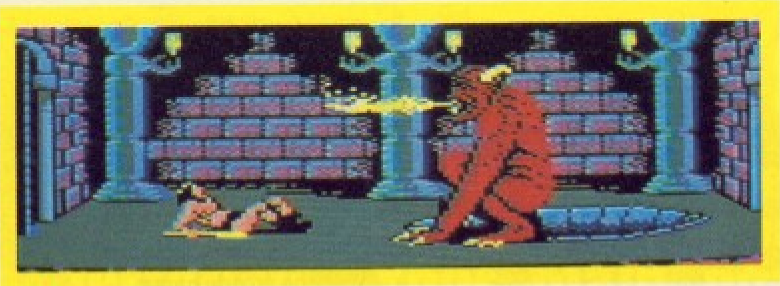
Grabbed by a pit monster in Level Three.

The final conflict — and Drax loses his head.



Orc attack!





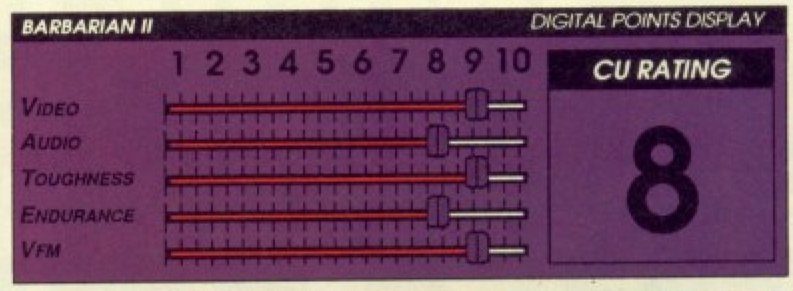
A heavy case of bad breath — Drax's final guardian.

Palace
64/128
Price:
£9.99 Cass
£14.99 Disk

dungeon, and a jewel which is used to gain access to the innermost part of Drax's lair. Extra lives may also be found lying around in the shape of skulls.

The journey through Drax's domain is fraught with danger: the landscape is punctuated by streams of acid and holes in the ground which must be jumped over. Each level is also populated by six different types of monster which vary from the small, head-kicking troll found in the original *Barbarian*, to a huge, bloated Dungeon Master – and I do mean huge!

Once encountered, these creatures attack relentlessly until they are defeated, or an escape is made (although they often persue their quarry into the next location!) Each blow sustained by either character depletes an energy bar, eventually killing the creature – which disappears in a cloud of green smoke – or ridding the barbarian of one of his six lives.



CU SCREEN STAR

Another ferocious battle . . .



Barbarian II is an impressive product: the colourful settings, attention to detail, large sprites and amazing animation make for a visual treat, and the music and spot effects are on an equal par.

The lack of freedom of movement and limited combat actions (there are now only four) do make *Barbarian II* a little frustrating at times: when the barbarian gets pinned to a wall by a particularly vicious beast, it's difficult to get free or make successful counter-moves. Also, locating the 'turn around' command at the same joystick position as the 'low chop' proves to be a real pain. After a chop, releasing the fire button in preparation for the next move results in the barbarian turning to face the wrong way. Similarly, the natural instinct when under attack from one of the taller creatures, to duck by pulling down, has the same result. In the ensuing panic, you get duffed up a treat.

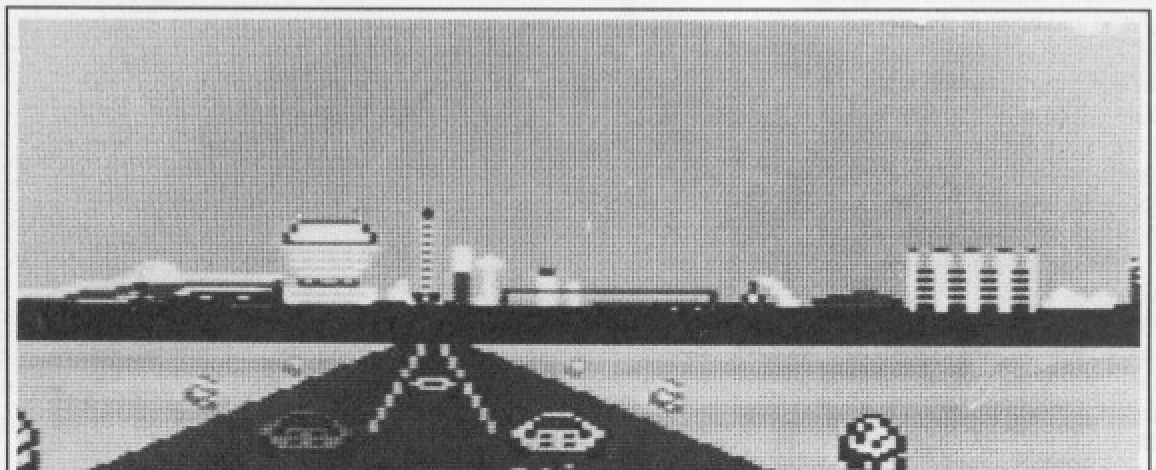


. . . ends in grief.

Until the layout of the screens and each aggressors' weak spots have been learned, *Barbarian II* will probably provide one or two fairly short games; but ultimately a lot of enjoyment is to be had from this brilliant hack 'em up, which sets new standards for the genre.

Steve Jarratt

ROAD BLASTERS



Road Blasters: *On the road to nowhere.*

64/128
US Gold
Price:
£9.99 cass
£14.99 disk

Basically, *Road Blasters* is a race cum shoot-'em-up and survival game — a bit like *The Fury*. Drive your pathetically armoured car along 50 stretches of twisty road taking you through five countries plus day and night times. The aim on each is to ensure you don't run out of fuel, get shot, crash into other cars and get to the checkpoint at the end of each section.

Various obstacles bar your way as you race from start to finish. First, and the one you will encounter the most, are the the other vehicles. Yellow stingers are slow and try to bar your way, but can be shot out quite easily with one squeeze on the trigger. Purple command cars are just as slow, but it takes a little more than your puny little machine gun to take them out. Motorcycles are a piece of cake to remove from the road, though if you miss them they have a habit of swerving into you. Rat Jeeps take two hits to destroy and have a habit of ganging up, so it's best to take them out at a distance.

As well as the other vehicles, there are mines in the road which, if driven over, simply blow you up. At either side of the road gun turrets appear, and blow you away. These are a lot harder to avoid than the arcade, but more on that later. Finally, oil slicks lie in the road and, when driven over, cause you to spin smoothly through 360 degrees (very handy when there are gun turrets all around you, as you can keep firing as you spin around.) Unfortunately, it's the only bit that comes close to the arcade. In fact, it's the only bit worth seeing.

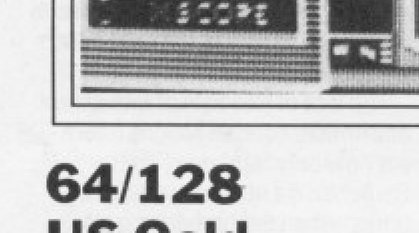
You are not alone in your quest to win the race; halfway along each stage there is a fuel bonus line. Cross it and your fuel goes back to maximum. Bubbles race along the track at random intervals (and they appear when you shoot specific cars) and these, when caught, replenish a little of your fuel. Occasionally, a little heaven sent help will appear, in the guise of a weapons plane, which drops items like a UZ cannon, which doubles your firing rate, a nitro injector, which raises your top speed to almost 300mph, a cruise missile, which causes all the cars within a specified distance to explode, and an electro-shield, which protects you from bullets, mines and other cars. The weapons are TOO goddamn hard to catch. It's all down to luck whether you are in the right position for them or not. Like the rest of the game, it's a lot harder than the arcade game.

One thing that made the coin-op easier to play was the correct sensation of steering the car. The wheel made all the diference, and you had total control over the vehicle as it skidded all over the road. The control method of the 64 version however is terrible. It's all a matter of luck whether you hit something that's not in the same lane as you (you can turn your car to shoot at an angle, by the way) and the car is impossible to steer. The feel isn't right for this kind of game, and you find youself sliding everywhere. Happily, and I don't know whether USG have intended this to add to the playability a little, *RB* has got 64 *Buggy Boy* syndrome, which means that it steers itself around corners. As ex-Ed Eugene Lacey quipped when his nurse let him use a sharp instrument for the first time since he left CU (i.e. a joystick), "they've devised a new driving system: the car stays stationary and you make the road move. If you don't understand what he means take a look at the road used in *Out Run*, for verily it is the same.

Graphics do bear a resemblance to the original, as a glance at the screenshots here will show you, but what really screws the game up is the animation. The gradual update on the cars and other objects is done very jerkily, though the animation of the main car is quite nice. One point I thought was odd is why do the gun turrets stay yellow all the way up to the screen, and suddenly get a nice coat of red paint just before they exit the screen?

Sound is OK. There are some seriously fine explosion sound effects, and a tunette between sections that does tend to grind on the ears. Here's a funny thing though. Apparently the computer can only do one effect at a time, so when you collect a bubble (ping-g-g-g) you can't hear any explosions for a good few seconds. And there's no engine noise. Where's the squeal of tires when you start a section? Where's the speech? Where's the sick bag?

Tony Dillon



ROADBLASTERS — *DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY*

	Rating (1–10)
Video	6
Audio	3
Toughness	5
Endurance	2
VFM	2

CU RATING

4

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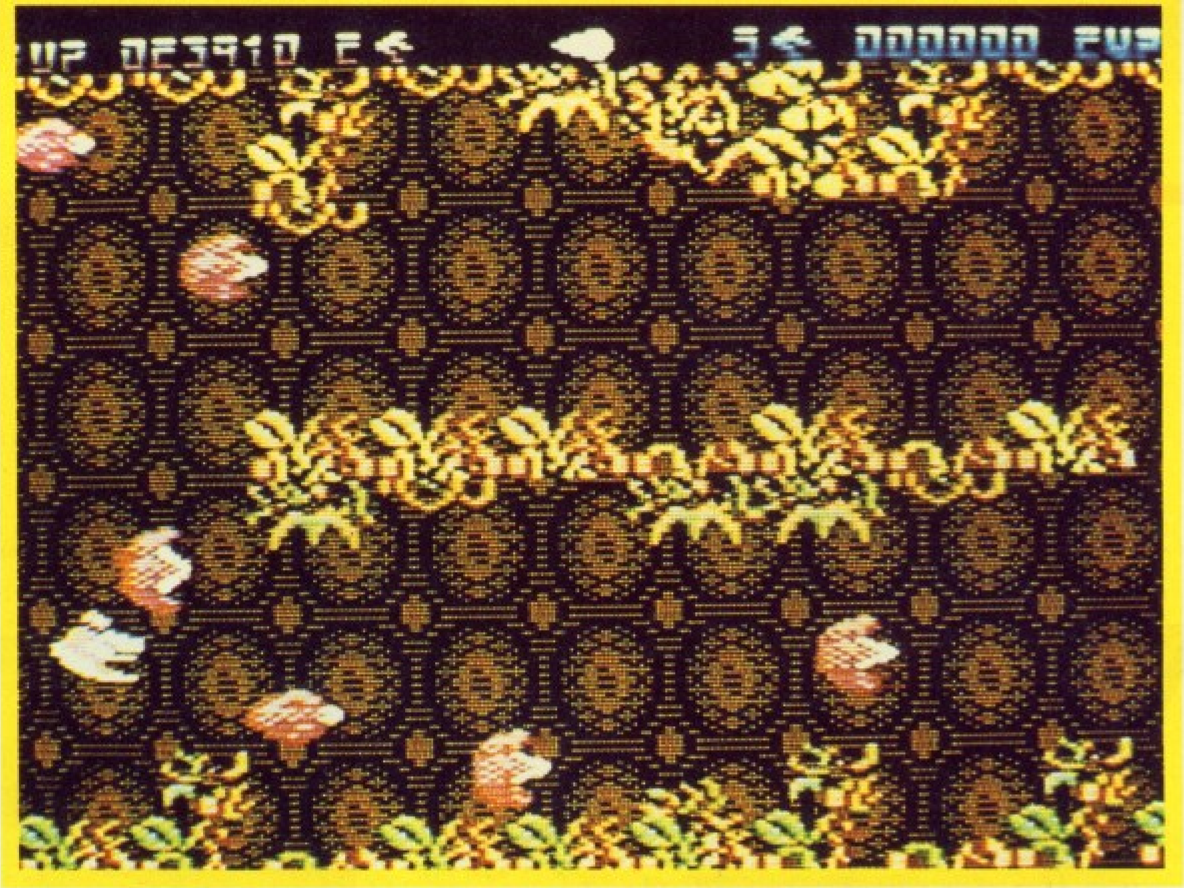
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Silverbird 64/128 Price: £1.99 Cass



Scorpius boasts some very aquatic-looking backdrops and sprites.

Shoot 'em ups have come a long way since the days of *Space Invaders*. No longer do you control a primitive, single-shot laser base facing single screens of simplistic bomb-dropping aliens. Now we have super-slick heavily armed craft negotiating umpteen levels of parallax scrolling terrain occupied by gazillions of intelligent or extremely large aliens spewing death in almost every direction. There have been plenty of coin-ops and full-price conversions and clones, but few, if any, budget games of this type available. And certainly none of this quality.

SCORPIUS

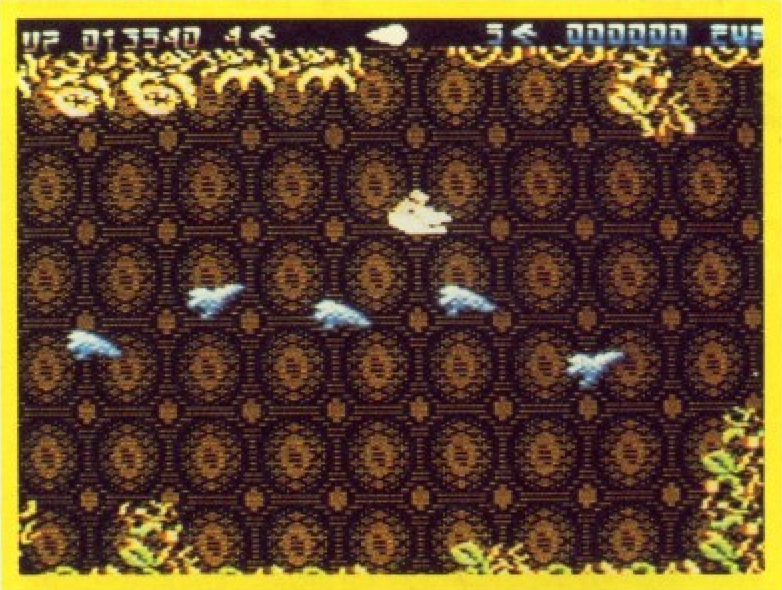
Scorpius is a straightforward, no messin' horizontally scrolling progressive shoot 'em up in what's best described as the *Nemesis/Salamander/Sidearms/R-Type* mould. That's to say, it's got bits similar to these coin-op classics. There are four lengthy levels to battle through with hoards of despicable alien types to shoot or avoid. All the alien sprites are extremely well drawn and animated and make up for the comparitively bland backdrops and weak SFX.

Either one or two players can take up the challenge, with both players on-screen in two player mode, just like *Side Arms* or *Salamander*. If things get a little too hot when you're playing on your own you can always call on an orbital to give you a hand. A press of the Commodore key brings it on-screen, while a further press sends the orbital shooting across the screen, firing and bombing when you do. Extra weaponry comes in the form of letters which float on screen and are shot to change to type of weapon you acquire when you pick up the letter. For example, collecting an S speeds you up, but shoot it once and it turns into an R for rapid fire, and shoot it again to turn the letter into a D for downward firing bombs. As your arsenal increases, different letters appear, allowing you to collect more bullets, two types of shield, a beam weapon (shades of *R-Type* here), missiles which are launched up-screen, and plenty of other useful bits beside.

At the end of each level there's a really nasty alien to dispose of before you can progress. Sadly, these creatures aren't so large and interesting as they could have been, with little more to destroy than small, simplistic bomb-chucking sprites.

All in all, *Scorpius* represents excellent value for money. The gameplay is a mite repetitive at times, but generally busy enough to keep you on your tootsies. It's pleasantly surprising to see a piece of software of this professional quality at such a low price. Nice one, Silverbird.

Gary Penn



High quality budget blasting from Silverbird.



Avoiding a group of swirling aliens on level one.

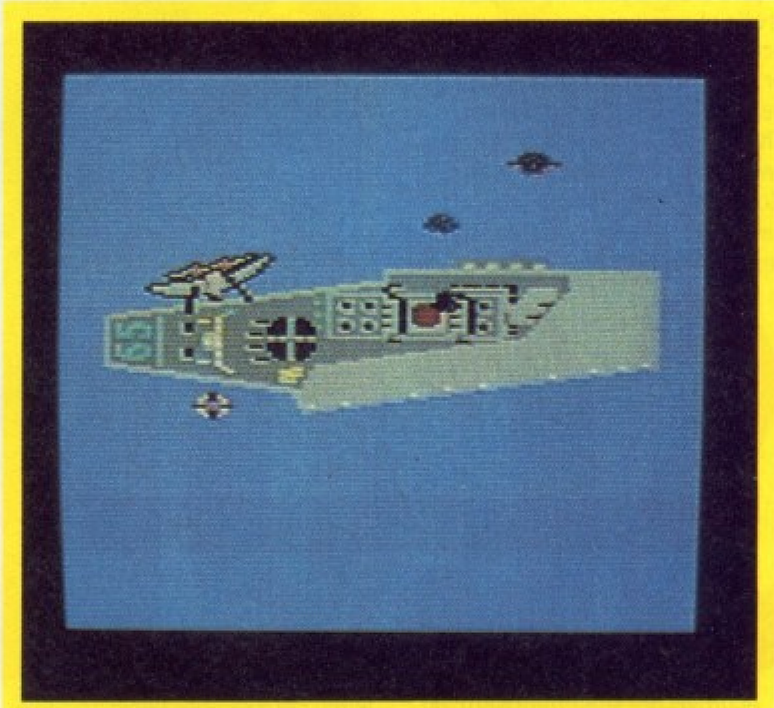
DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY (scale 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10)

Video	
Audio	
Toughness	
Endurance	
VFM	

CU RATING: **8**

TYPHOO

64/128
Ocean
Price:
£8.95 Cass
£12.95 disk



Dive-bombing the enemy carrier.

A problem common to all 64 owners comes when you trot down to your local software shop and think: "Hmmm, I really want to get that *Afterburner* variant, but I can't because I want to buy the *Flying Shark* clone as well and I can only afford one." But now, thanks to Ocean, that dilemma has been well and truly squashed, cut into little squares and flushed down the U-bend because Typhoon is both games in one!

Converted from the little-known Konami coin-op (well I've never heard of it!) the game casts you as a lone starfighter pilot on a desperate mission to attack an alien planet and prevent them from conquering Earth, or something like that. The first section (homage to *Afterburner*) simulates your voyage downwards through the atmosphere on your approach to the planet. Although your craft is supposed to be some hi-tech mega spaceship of the future, it bears a startling resemblance to a cut-down version of your F-14 from *Afterburner*. The



Over enemy territory

A head-to-head at 20,000 ft.



TYPHOON	DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	
Audio	
Toughness	
Endurance	
Vfm	

CU RATING

8

enemy fighters scream out of the screen towards you, kamikaze style, before veering away to the left or right and off the screen. Your guns are aimed by lining up an enemy plane with your fixed on-screen cross-hair and letting rip with your cannons. Extra weapons can be collected by shooting down the missiles that the enemy occasionally fire at you, such as a small homing missile that fires out from your undercarriage. But remember, should you fire too late, you'll find yourself in a head-to-head with about 250 tons of enemy plane and it's goodnight for you.

After scrapping the allotted number of fighters, you proceed to the second half of this section, where your mission is to dive bomb an enemy aircraft carrier by zooming down on it, constantly pumping it with your cannons, while all the time avoiding the fighters and bombs spewed at you. Should you manage to hit the carrier enough times, it blows up and you can proceed to the next level. After a short(ish) wait for the second section to load, you'll find that miraculously you've been transformed into a helicopter that scrolls up through typically *1942/ Flying Shark*-type aquatic landscapes. Weaponwise you're given a standard twin machine gun that you can use to destroy enemy plans and short-range bombs, used to dispose of nasty enemy ground targets such as boats, gun installations, and later on in the level, aircraft carriers and submarines that appear from out of the water when you least expect it.

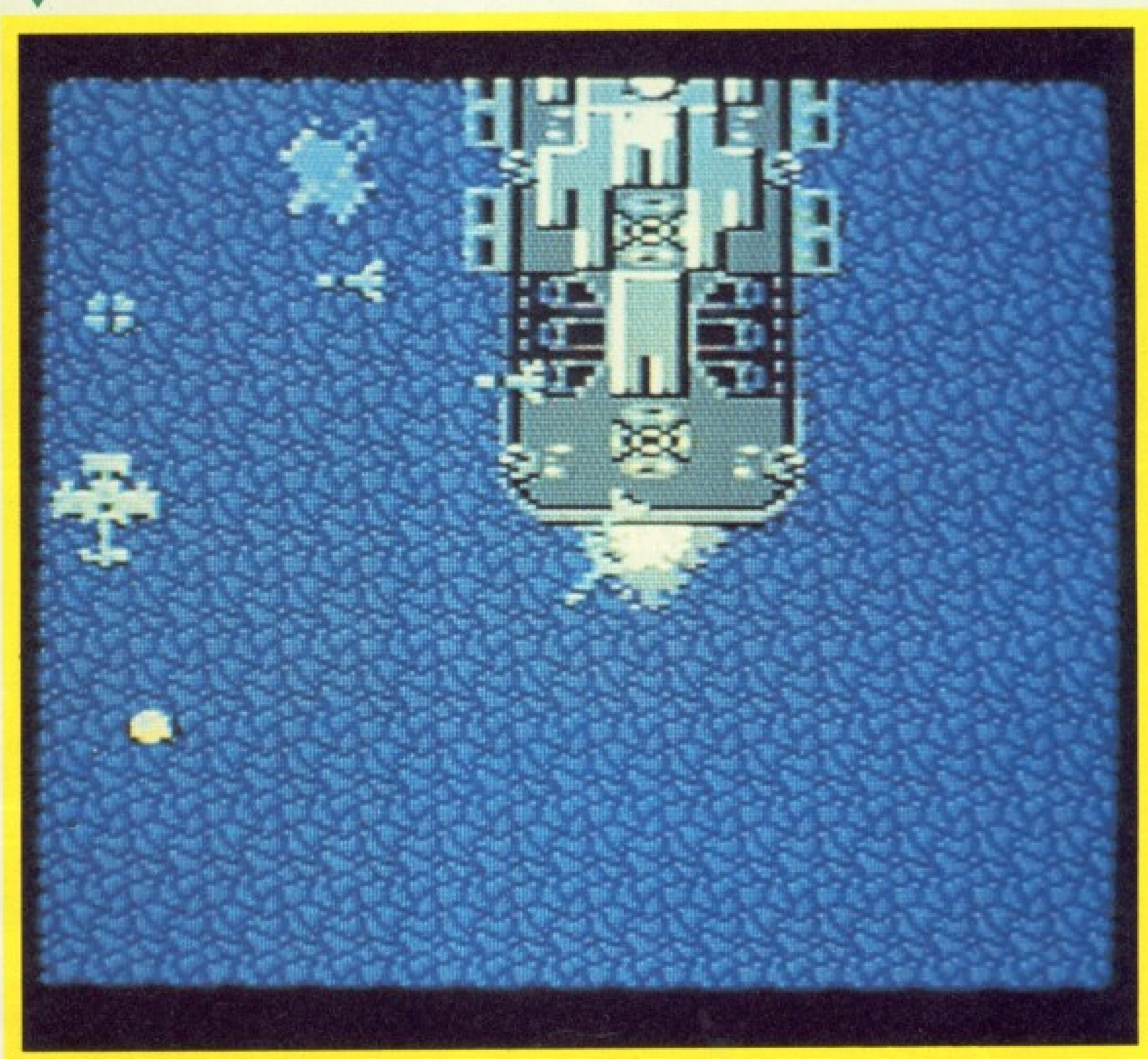
Typhoon is one of the best shoot, em ups to appear on the 64 in a long while. Both game sections are extremely playable and the *Afterburner* section has particularly splendid graphics and sound, sporting fast animation, well defined enemy fighters and a thumpin' good soundtrack to accompany the action. Although the first section may be a little on the easy side, this is more than made up for by the vertical level (it's *meeeaan*). *Typhoon* may not be the most original game on the market today, but the novel combination of two brilliant games make this an absolute must.

Gary Whitta



Bandit blasted!

Sink that ship. . .



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Screen shot from Spectrum version.



Screen shot from Amstrad version.



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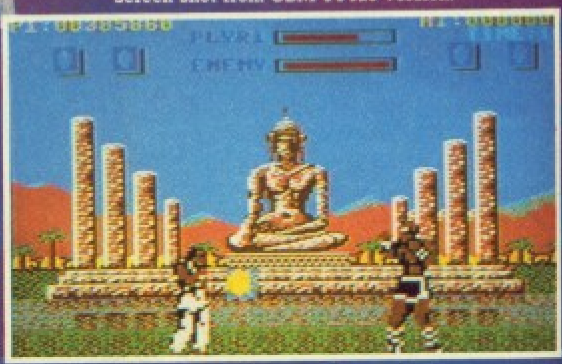
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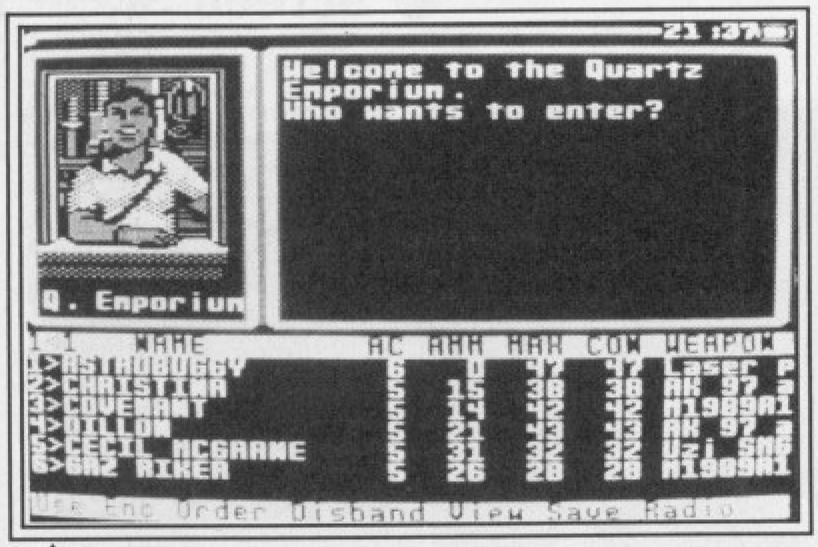
GIANTS OF THE VIDEO GAMES INDUSTRY

Screen shot from CBM 64/128 version.



Screen shot from Atari ST version.





Caveat Emptor!

WASTELAND — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	Rating (1–10)
Video	8
Audio	n/a
Toughness	8
Endurance	9
VFM	8

CU RATING: 8

experience points you gain by blasting people.

Actually, small communities aren't the only ones to survive: some cities have made it too, most notably Las Vegas (the house betted against any missiles hitting, and as we all know the house always wins). Now the fair city of Las Vegas is inhabited by gangs of killer robots, heavily armed but with rich pickings when destroyed.

Out and about in the desert can be more deadly than the cities. Run out of water and you'll die of thirst. Fail to take a gieger counter and you're liable to glow so much you won't need a torch. Mutants and snakes are a constant hazard, so you need to be well armed; being able to fire a gun straight is more important than walking and breathing (so it says in the instructions).

What came as a complete surprise to me was a strange little feature whereby when something interesting happens the computer rattles you off a paragraph number which you have to read from the special book supplied. This helps to give the game more of a story-like atmosphere, but it also enables the dishonest player to look up any passwords needed in the game rahter than find them out for him or herself. So well subplotted is *Wasteland* that you could well find yourself jumping straight out of one mission and into another.

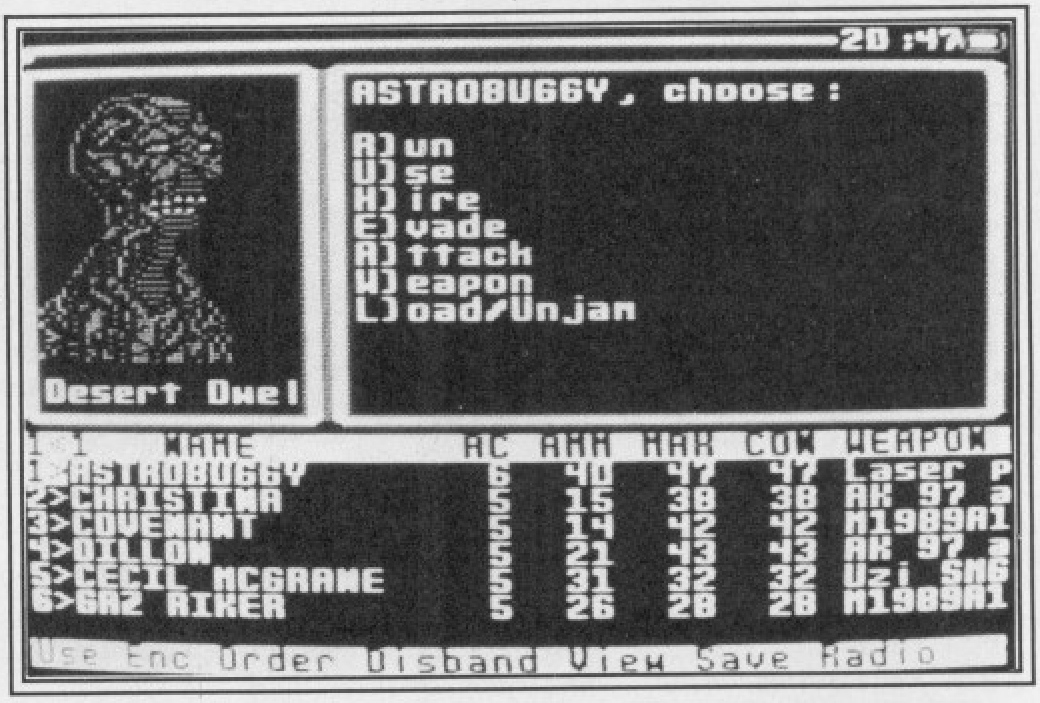
The graphics are a meld of traditional overhead views with the combat sequences produced in the style that made *Bards Tale* a winner.

This is an immensely playable game but with one fault, you need *four* blank disks to play it as you are required to make backups of all four game sides. Disks aside this has to be one of the ultimate RPG's. Slick gameplay, slick graphics (no sound but who cares?). Get it while it's hot.

Mark Patterson

WASTELAND

64/128
Electronic Arts
Price: £14.99/disk



He should have used Septon.

Set in post-holocaust America, *Wasteland* is the most absorbing RPG I have played this year. The plot goes roughly as follows: it's 1998 and America have a giant space citadel in operation. Worried by America's new space missile capabilities many of the non-aligned countries (like South America) declare their allignce to America. Most of the remaining neutral countries then take Russia's side, leaving only Ireland, Switzerland and Sweden neutral.

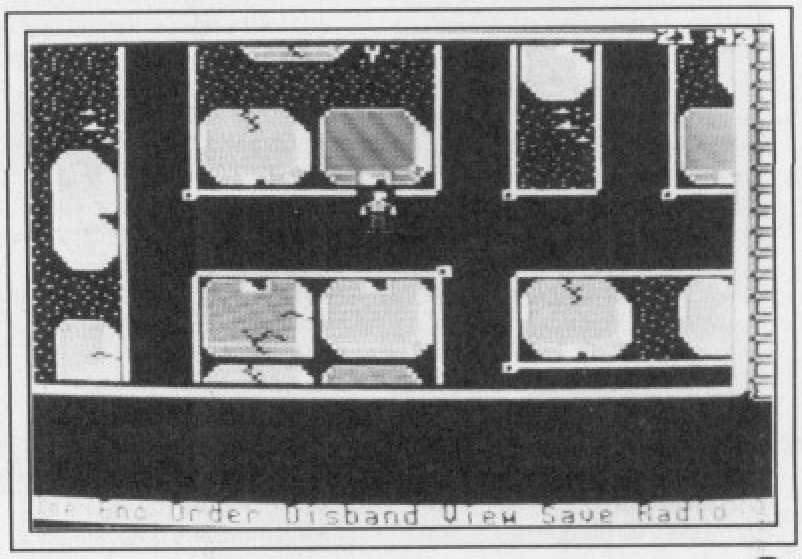
Two weeks before the Citadel is due for full operations it's crew transmit a distress signal. Shortly after the signal is received nearly all the satellites orbiting Earth get wiped away. In pure panic the Soviet Union and United States use up nearly 90% of their arsenals in all-out nuclear war.

Now all that's left in America are a few struggling pockets of civilisation, the most successful being the rangers — ex US army engineers who were in the desert building bridges at the time of the war — who joined with small bands of survalists to form a thriving community.

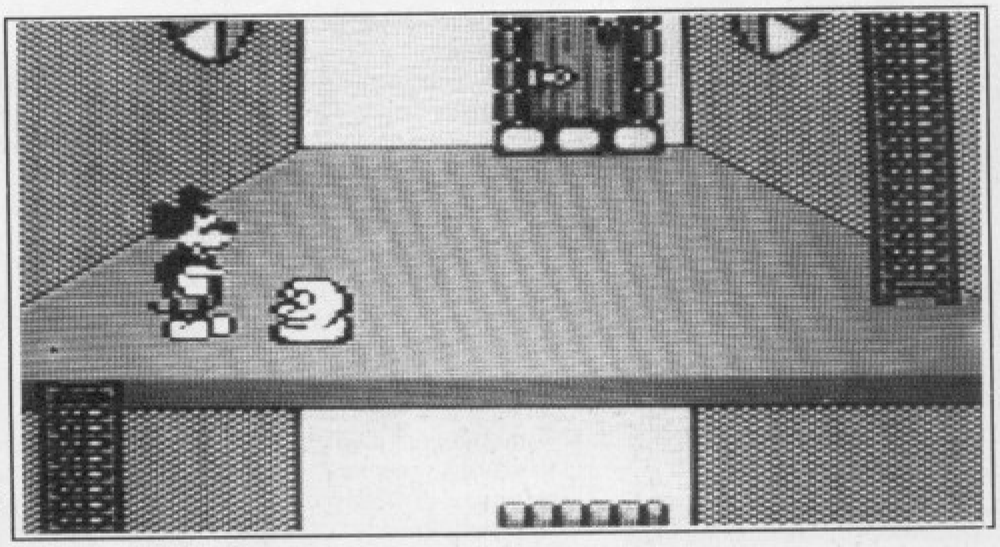
Your party is a group of these rangers, sent out to investigate a series of disturbances throughout the local regions. A good task since you are not limited in what you have to do, and you can go anywhere within the bounderies of the wasteland.

You can create up to four of your own characters in a party with anything up to three Non Playing Characters (NPC's) also joining the group. The name of the game is violence and lots of it. Unlike most RPG's there are no swords, spells or magic items: in *Wasteland* you survive with crowbars, Uzi's, LAW rockets, grenades and various other weapons. You can also earn promotions based on the number of

Casing the casinos.



Gremlin
Commodore 64/128
Price: £9.99 Cass £14.99 Disk



A moose meets a smile.

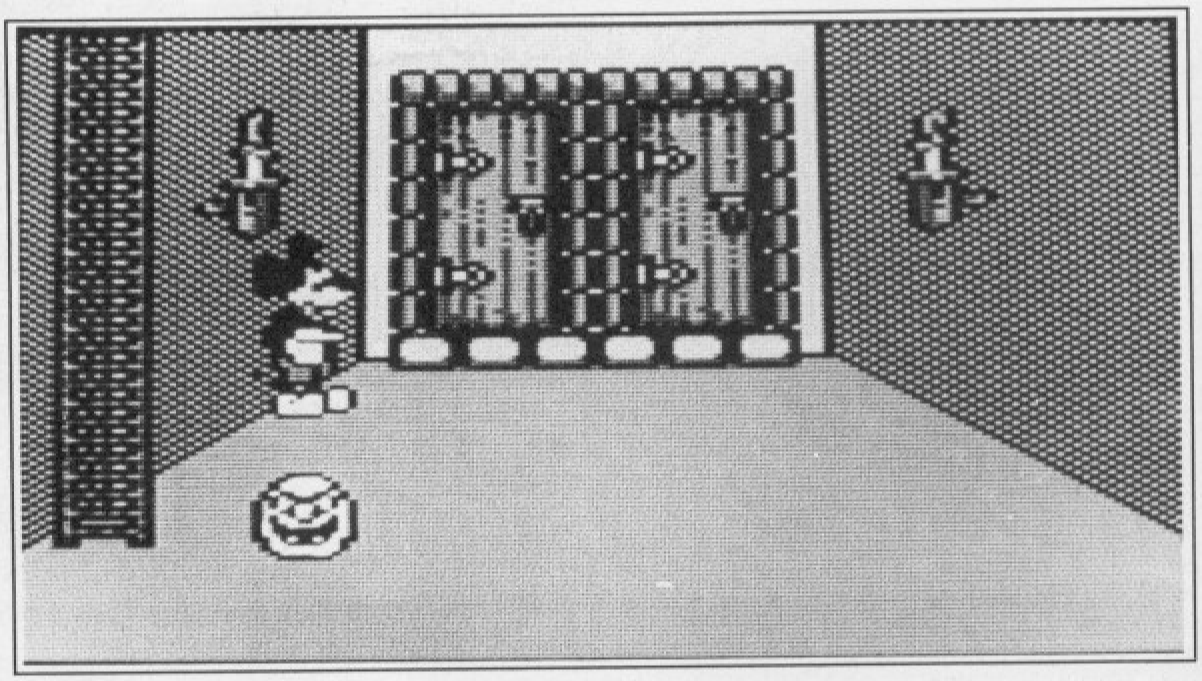
MICKEY mouse

Quite why a rodent who wears red Y-fronts with white buttons and whose only significant characteristic is the fact that his age qualifies him for free travel on public transport should be a world-wide cult figure is anybody's guess: myself I find him far too clean-cut and 'cute' for my taste, but all the same, on with the game!

The four wicked witches of the East, North, South and West have stolen Merlin's wand. Why? So that their royal 'orriblenesses can put a curse on Disneyland therefore evicting all the current tenants, such as Minnie, Goofy, Donald and Co. and the other cuties we learnt to loathe! Well, the one thing we do know about our squeaky little rodent hero is that he does like to have an adventure, or to put it another way he simply can't leave anyone else to their own business! Mickey intends to get the wand back and restore Disneyland to its rightful owners.

To do this, Mickey has to enter each of the four towers of Disney castle, destroy the witches' henchmen, and complete all the little puzzle sub-games. The sub-games vary from mini-Gauntlet type mazes where you have to collect various items for your quest, to a deranged upside-downy version of space invaders.

To help on his quest Merlin has given Mickey a water pistol full of magic water, which will not just terminate the nasties when shot, but turns them into something that will help Mickey on his quest.



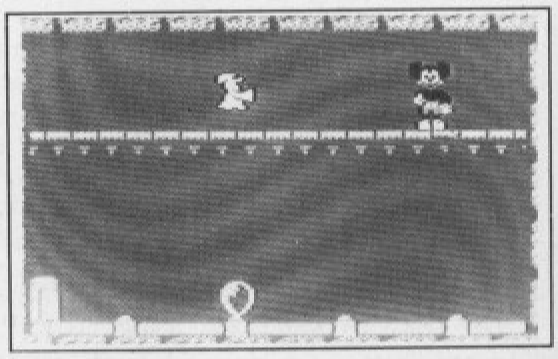
Get ugly, Mickey.

Among the things that the monsters will turn into when they're shot are:
Potions: These will boost Mickeys energy supply (as he only has the one single solitary life) and also boost Mickeys water supply.
Bomb: Yes! You guessed it, this will blast all nasties off the screen.
Glue: Sticks all nasties to the floor.
Shield: Temporary invincibility.
Ugly face: When is looking as repulsive as Cyril Smith an advantage? When it means that you're so ugly your enemies run away from you!
Lightning: Makes you as fast as…

Killing monsters is not simply a press-the-trigger matter. Oh no, you have two types of weapon: your trusty water pistol and a mallet. Your job is to work out which particular evils are affected by which.

Don't misunderstand me, my little treacle-buns, *Mickey Mouse* isn't really a bad game, it's just that every time I play it I get Deja Vu. Not of any particular game, but of around three hundred other puzzle-and-shoot arcade adventures throughout the last five years — and I wasn't really that keen on them then. Despite the fact that at least the graphics look like Mickey Mouse (a point on which many cartoon hero games have failed) and the sound is not a bad little rendition of the music from Fantasia, basically my feelings towards this product are similar to those of my feelings toward Mickey himself — all a bit insignificant and dated. Sorry Mick!

Ferdy Hamilton



Beset by a ghostie.

MICKEY MOUSE — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

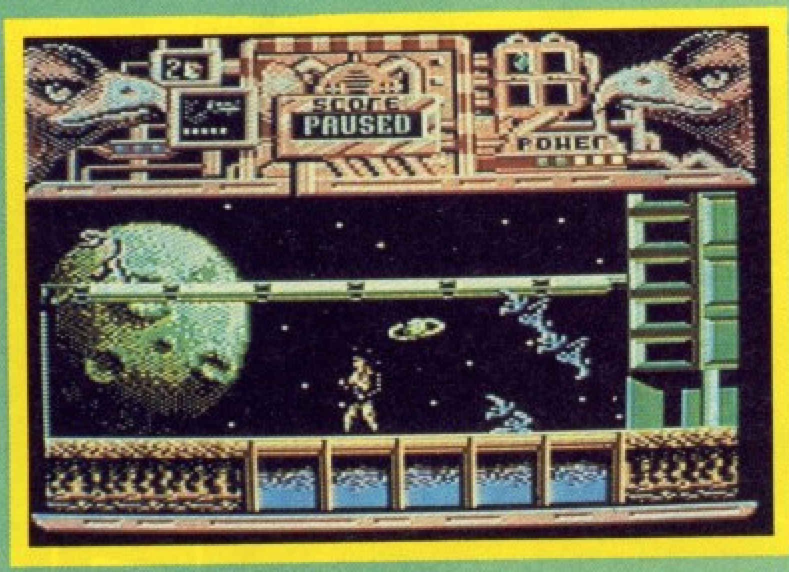
VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING

5


QUADRALIEN

HA



Hawkeye offers plenty of shooting frolics . . .

64/128
Thalamus
Price:
£9.99 Cass
£12.99 Disk

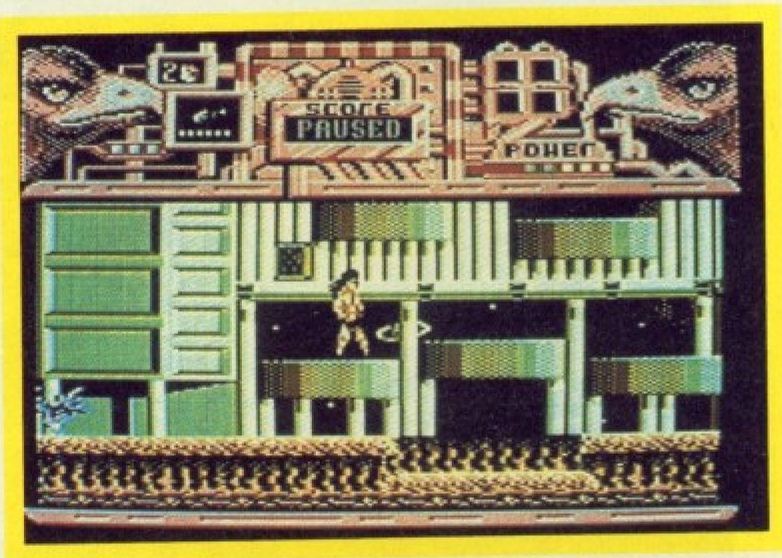
Nothing has been heard from Newsfield-owned Thalamus since Martin Walker's brilliant *Hunter's Moon* was released just before the end of last year. However, the silence is about to be broken with *Hawkeye*, a horizontally scrolling platform game cum shoot 'em up written by a trio of Dutch ex-hackers, the Boys Without Brains.

As with all previous Thalamus games, the graphics are of a very high standard. Each level has a gorgeous static backdrop over which the platforms and immediate foreground scroll. The overall effect is very impressive, especially when there are windows or large gaps in the scrolling foreground scenery.

The sound is also commendable. The title track is a little too much like the one on Hewson's *Cybernoid* for my liking, but the in-game tunes and sound effects are excellent.

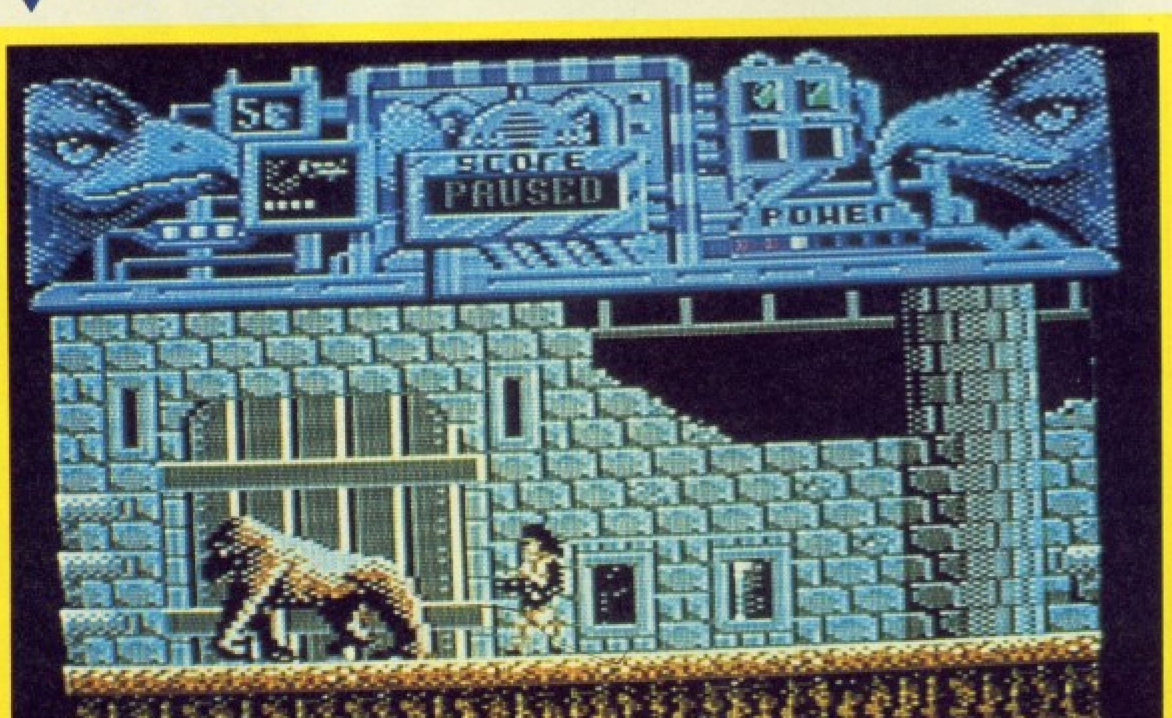
So far so good, but what of the game itself? Well, the gameplay is very straightforward, with the player taking control of a lanky, long-haired sprite who runs and jumps across each of the 12 levels in search of puzzle pieces. Apparently, the hero is modelled after *Delta* and *Quedex* author Stavros Fasoulas (who, incidentally, is *still* having fun playing soldiers on the Russian border during his term of National Service with the Finnish army).

There are four puzzle pieces per level, which appear one at a time. The whereabouts of a piece is indicated by the two hawk heads at the top of the screen – if the object is to the left of the hero, the left hawk's eye blinks; the opposite occurs for an item to the right. A puzzle piece is picked up automatically when touched, and when all four are collected the hero can run off the right-hand side of the landscape to finish the level, whereupon the next one is loaded from tape or disk. The multi-load system is very good indeed – while the next level loads, an animated sequence shows



. . . and loadsaplatforms!

Stavros shoots up a gorilla.

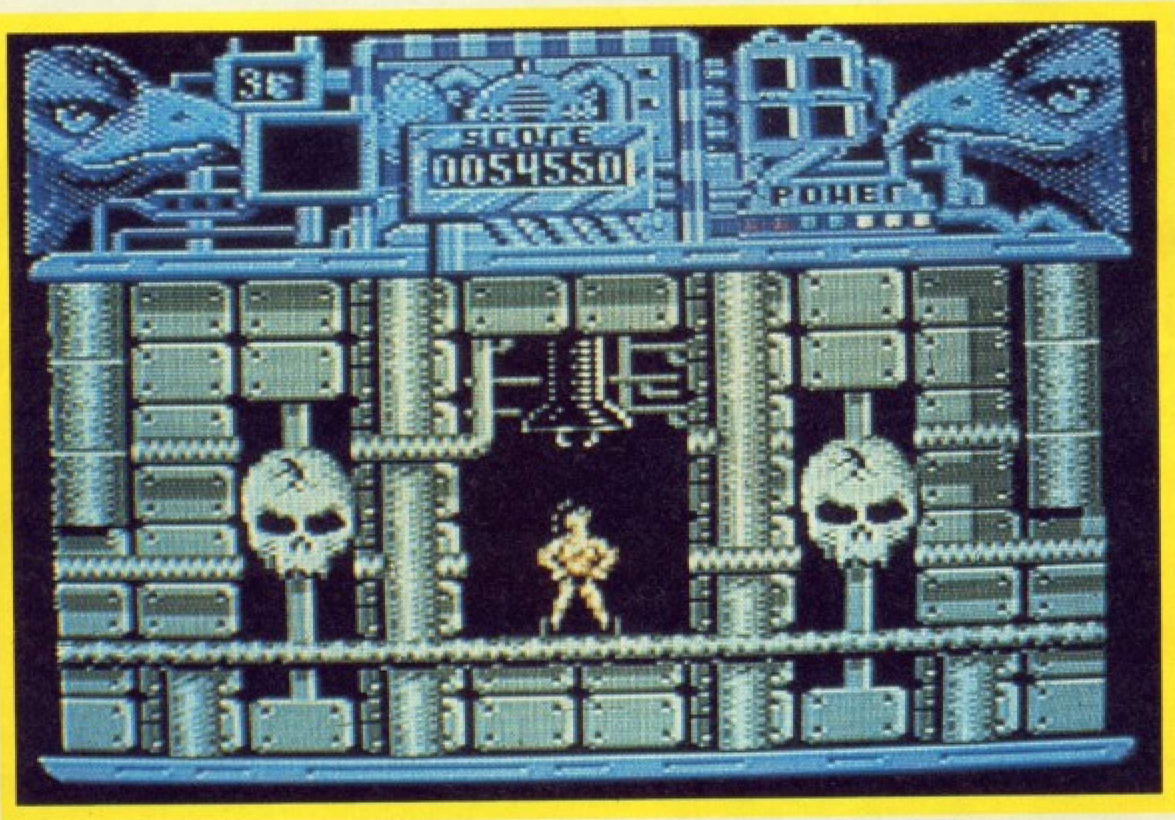


Stavvy being 'recharged' and a bonus is awarded for the amount of power and bullets remaining.

Throughout the mission, Stav is beset by a wide range of creatures which attempt to deplete his power by bashing into him. The most common creature is the crappy-looking bouncing duck, but others include beautifully-animated birds and some brilliant giant dinosaurs, cavemen and gorillas.

Fortunately, Stav is armed with four types of weapon with which to vanquish the enemy sprites. Machine gun, rocket launcher and laser are all high-powered, but have limited ammo, while the pistol is

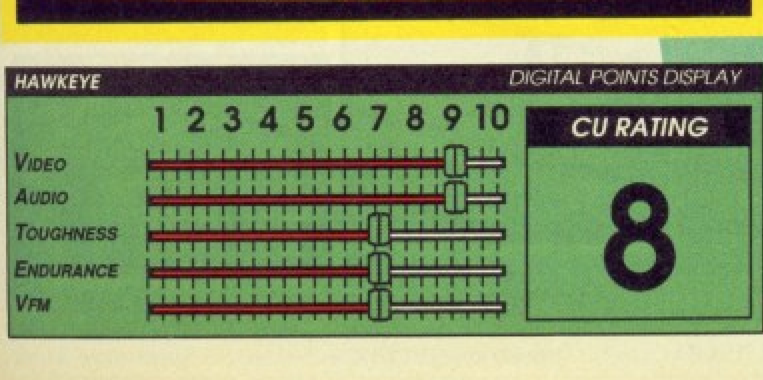
awkeye



While the next section loads, Stav is recharged.

Battling through "Blue Monday" level.





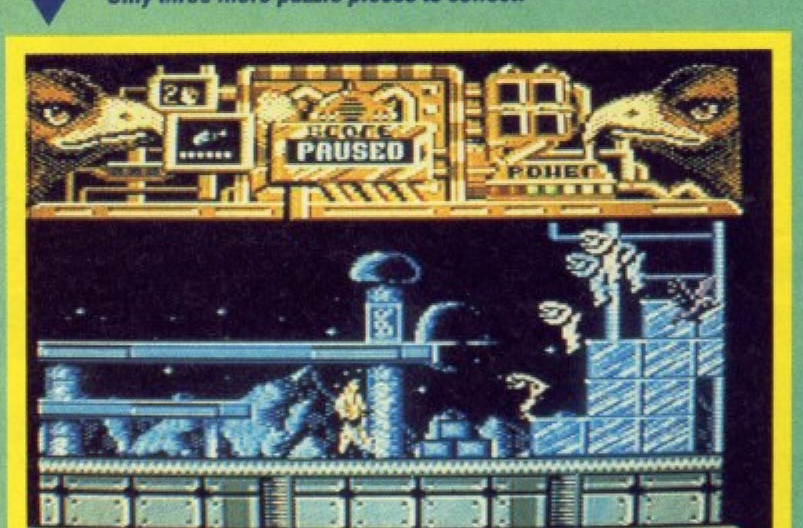
feeble in comparison but has an endless supply of bullets. Each weapon is selected by using the function keys or by holding fire and moving the joystick left or right, and can be topped up by collecting the glowing icons which regularly appear.

Now all this sounds pretty good, and to be honest when I first played *Hawkeye* I thought that it was destined for great things. The gameplay *is* fast and frenetic, but in the end it just boils down to running left and right, picking up pieces while shooting anything that gets in your way, level after level. Shoot 'em up fans may find this sufficient entertainment, but those who like their play a little more varied, or like using their brains as well as their joysticks might find the action tiresome.

Therefore I've decided that *Hawkeye* doesn't quite deserve a Screen Star. I also recommend you try it out before parting with your cash.

Julian Rignall

Only three more puzzle pieces to collect.

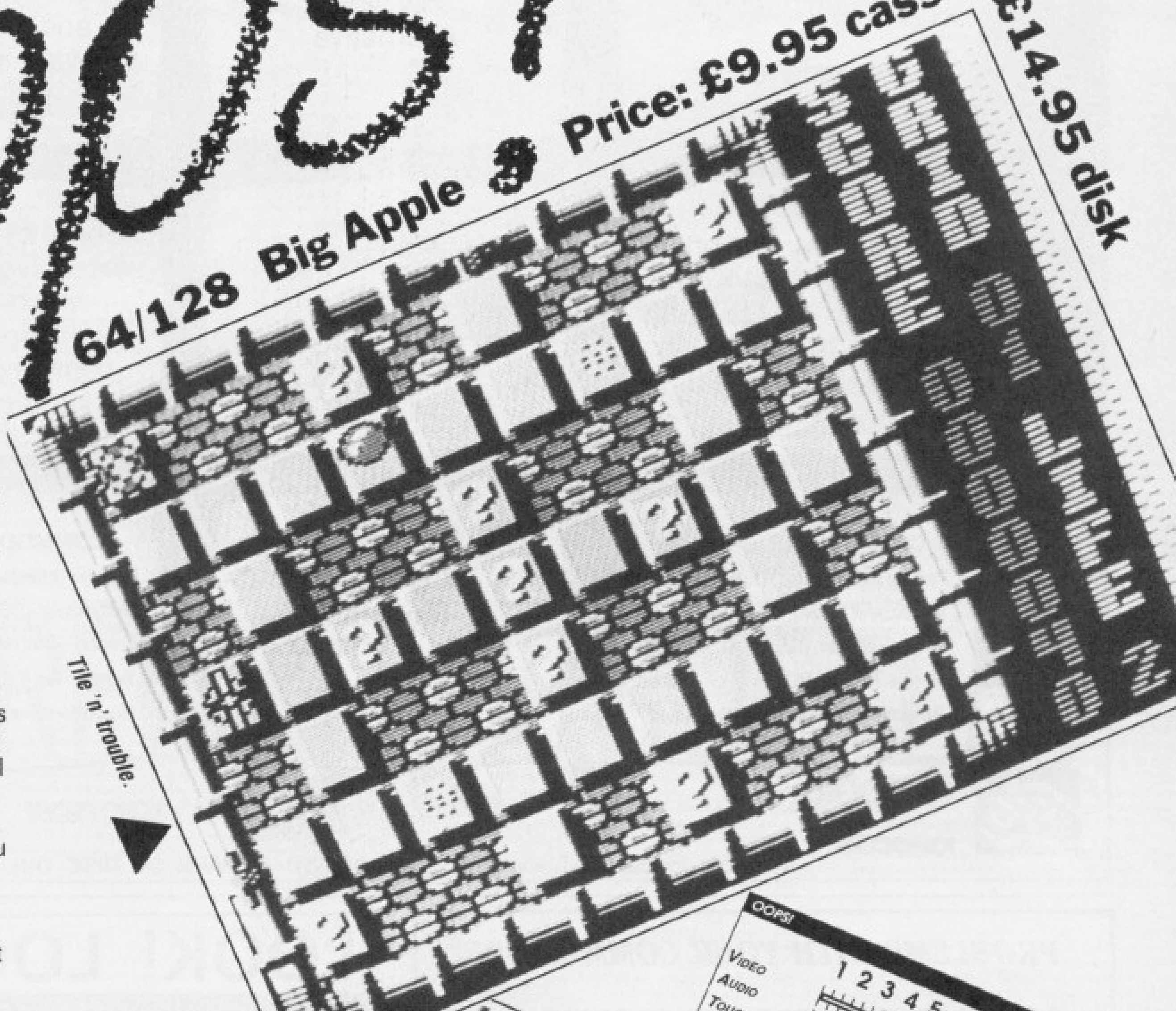




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CONTESTANT
COMPUTER PACER
CONTINUE PRACTICE? YES
TIME: 00.00
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All screens from the Commodore 64 version of the game.
Available for Amstrad CPC Cassette & Disk · Atari ST Disk · CBM 64/128 Cassette & Disk · MSX 64 Cassette · Spectrum 48/128K, + 2 Cassette · Spectrum + 3 Disk
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Oops!

64/128 Big Apple ● Price: £9.95 cass £14.95 disk



Tile 'n' trouble.

*O*ops! signals the arrival of a new name in the software biz, that of the Big Apple Entertainment Co – a grand title for a company based not in NY but in the less salubrious surroundings of the Brunswick Industrial Park, N11.

One of the 'first pickings from the Big Apple tree', *Oops!* is described in the publicity handouts as being 'as original as it is fiendish, as fresh as it is addictive'. Well, if Big Apple's idea of an original game is this tired old Pac-man derivative, then let's all pray that the Big Apple tree has a lean crop this year.

It's one of those games where you have to move your 'droid' (funny pulsating square thing) along the pathways of the 'space-time continuum' (32 tiled grids) to collect the 'vital gravity pods' (pulsating circular thingies).

The skill lies in mapping out a route around each grid which allows you to pick up all the pods as well as passing over as many bonus cells as possible, gaining extra points, lives and time. As these bonus cells are identical to the booby-trapped cells which cause the pathways to disintegrate, it's a case of learning from your mistakes. Fortunately, the layout of each grid remains the same from one game to the next.

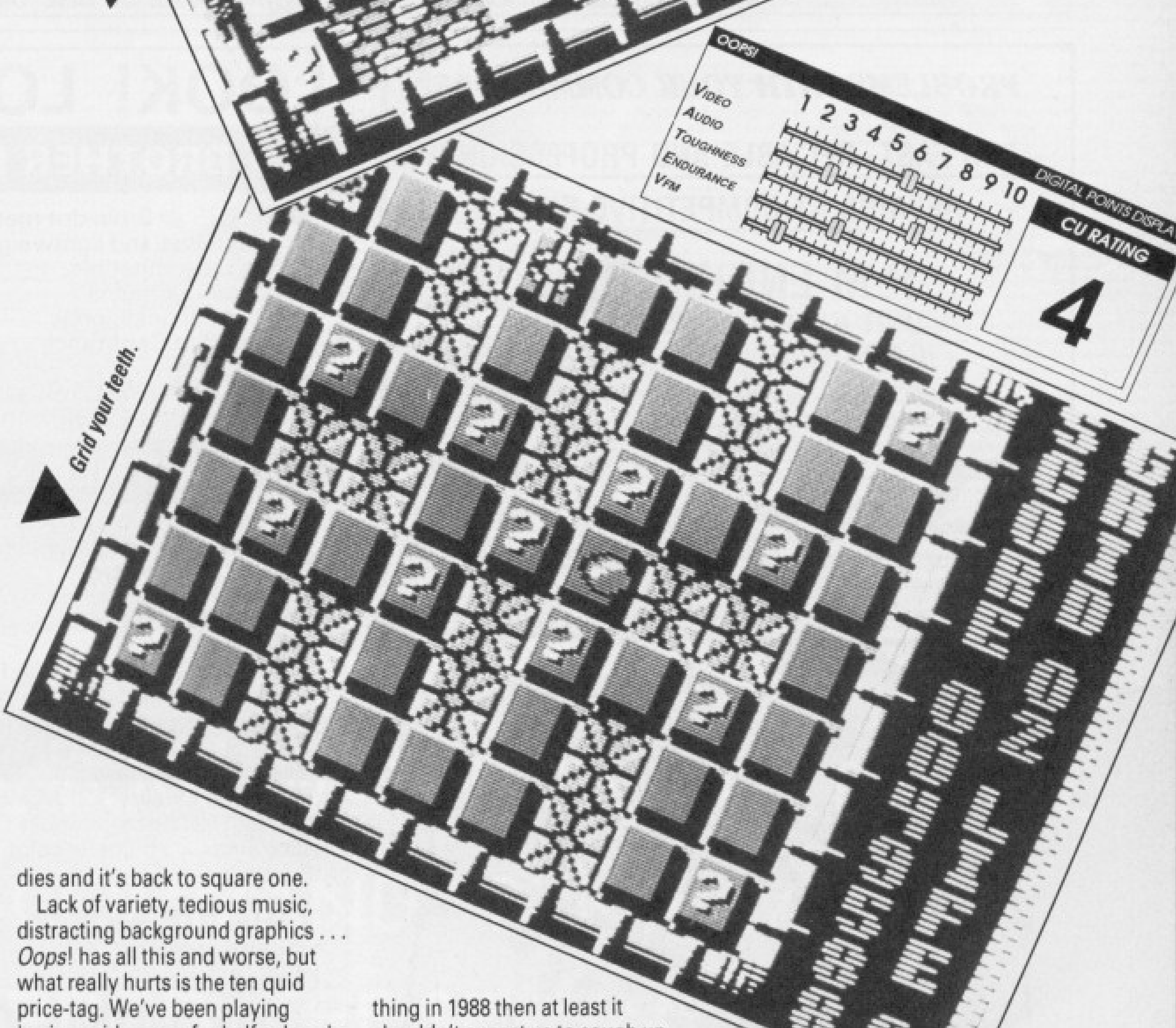
There are various other surprises in store, such as arrows which push you into oblivion, tiles which teleport you from one corner of the grid to another, and pathways which flash in and out of existence, making movement along them a matter of split-second timing.

And all the while you've got to keep out of the way of the bouncing ball (oops! sorry – I mean 'electron bomb') and never stay in one spot for too long in case the rampant Rimlords come pelting horizontally or vertically towards you. Your droid is armed with a delayed-action explosive to use against the enemy, thogh you might find it's better just to keep out of danger's way.

As with all games of this ilk, interest wanes quickly and the further you succeed in getting, the less likely it is that 'oops!' will be your exclamation when your droid dies and it's back to square one.

Lack of variety, tedious music, distracting background graphics . . . *Oops!* has all this and worse, but what really hurts is the ten quid price-tag. We've been playing boring grid games for half a decade now, and if any software house has the nerve to release this kind of thing in 1988 then at least it shouldn't expect us to cough up more than two quid for it.

Bill Scolding



Grid your teeth.

AMIGA EXTRA



REVIEWED: IKARI WARRIORS · ICE PALACE
CARRIER COMMAND · BLACK LAMP ·

TIPPED: THE SENTINEL

MAPPED: WIZBALL



OFF SHORE WARRIOR

"Violence on the high seas, the ultimate test of manhood" screams the blurb accompanying Titus' latest blast 'em up *Off Shore Warrior*. Phew, right-on or what??!?! Set in the year 2050, *OSW* pits you against your fellow citizens in a death or glory aquatic race-cum-dogfight, all for the amusement of a brutalised populace. Sounds like a cross between the Circus Maximus, Megacity One and the boat race scene in "Live And Let Die" to us, and if it manages to be all that, it sure will be spectacular. Alas, until its released this September, you'll just have to make do with this rather pretty screenshot.

FUTURE AMIGA PREV



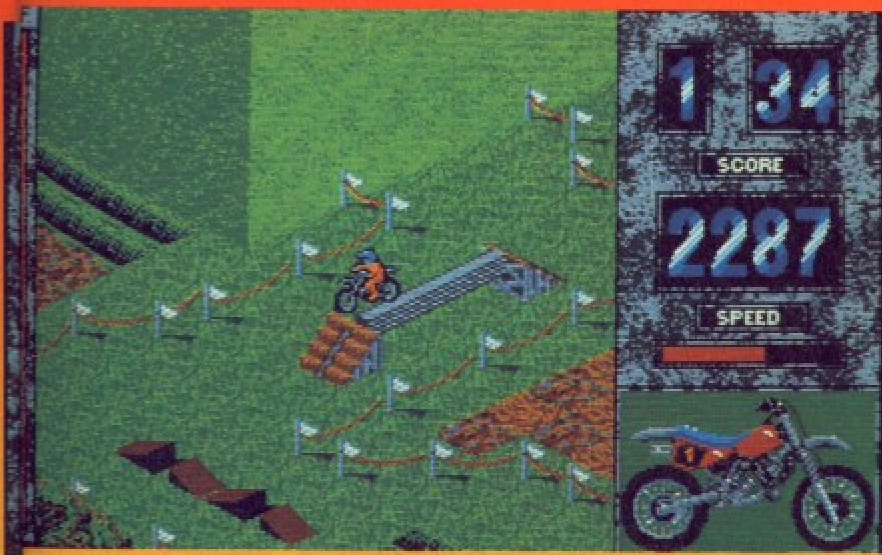
THUNDERCATS

Arriving on the office doormat *just* too late for review this month was another from the plethora of Elite Amiga titles, *Thundercats*. Based around the kiddies' cartoon that's currently getting an airing on Saturday Morning TV (Mark Patterson's all-time favourite TV show, incidentally), the game has you playing Liono, lord of the Thundercats in a mission to retrieve the sacred Eye of Thundera from the clutches of the evil despot Mumm-ra by making his way across many levels of enemy territory, bumping off Muum-ra's minions with his trusty Sword of Omens (or any other weapons he manages to pick up along the way). Expect a full review next month just in time for it's release around the time of the PC Show.

MORTVILLE MANOR

An urgent telegram from an old friend, obviously close to death, brings you back to a mysterious scene from your childhood, the grim old house that is Mortville Manor. What are you looking for? Who knows? As the scenario so enigmatically puts it, "if you knew that already, there wouldn't be any mystery!" *Mortville Manor*, from French softhouse Lankhor, was hugely successful in its country of origin, and its English distributors, Active, are confident that the English version, due out here this month, will sell in similarly massive quantities on this side of the Channel.





MOTORBIKE MADNESS

Coming shortly from Mastertronic, *Motorbike Madness* puts you in the saddle of a scrambling bike. You can choose between racing against the clock or taking on computer-controlled opponents, with all the hazards of the real thing to be negotiated, and hard-earned prize money being lost repairing the damage caused by every misshap and being spent to carry out essential enhancements necessary to increase your chances in the next race. Up hill, down dale, around tyres and between flags is the story here: those who like the sound of rubber on mud will love this, we reckon. *Motorbike Madness*, on the Mastertronic label, is scheduled for release in early September.

E SHOCK
VIEW AMIGA

VECTORBALL

As any software Boss will tell you, if you ever run out of sports to convert to computer, simply invent some new ones, preferably involving robots and other such futuristic elements. The latest company to make use of this rule are Mastertronic, formerly known for their other futuresport sim, *Blastaball*. *Vectorball* is reputedly "A blend of the speed of Ice-hockey, the precision of Netball and the complex curves of Crown Green Bowls" where two droids battle it out over a series of wierd and wonderful specially constructed pitches, containing ditches, hills, valleys and ridges, in an attempt to score goals by firing a ball at designated target areas on the pitch boundaries. Promising ever-so squiffy graphics (check the screen-shot) and nerve-wracking playability, *Vectorball* is due out any day now.





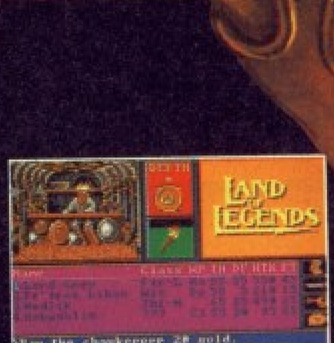
BIONIC COMMANDO

Swinging it's way through trees and stormtroopers to your local software shop soon is Go's *Bionic Commando*, converted from the Capcom coin-op original. Our dear ol' Gazza enthused over the cover-featured 64 version some months back, and no doubt Amiga owners will have been eagerly awaiting its release on the 16-bit. Well, people, this month's should see the end of your vigil. Extended arm, fun for everyone.

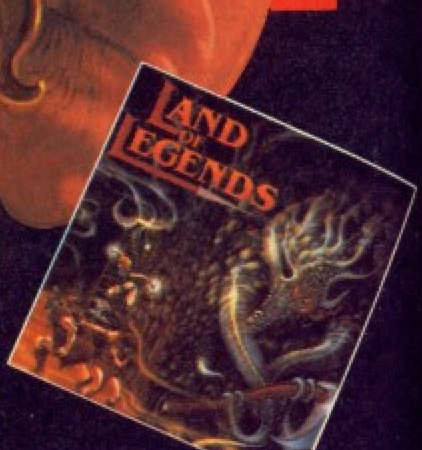
JOURNEY THROUGH HELL TO THE LAND OF LEGENDS

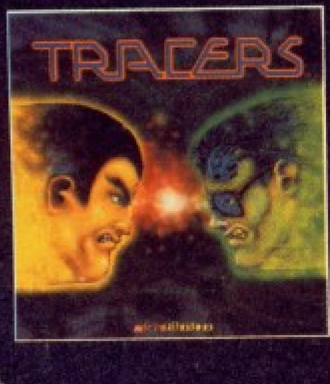


LAND OF LEGENDS is a dungeon-type adventure game. The first person graphic format gives you the sense of actually being in the dungeon as you roam through the multiple levels of various dungeons which you create. **LAND OF LEGENDS** has an over-head viewing mode which enables you to prepare for the nasty creatures and beasts which you will encounter. Do you have what it takes to become a dungeon master? **Amiga – £29.99**



Amiga screen shot shown





AVAILABLE SEPT
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▶ TRACERS

As part of the integrated Human Operations Police in the Techopollis Precinct you will be after a new breed of criminal – those which hide in computers.

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Can you stop them? **Amiga – £24.99**

VISA AMERICAN EXPRESS

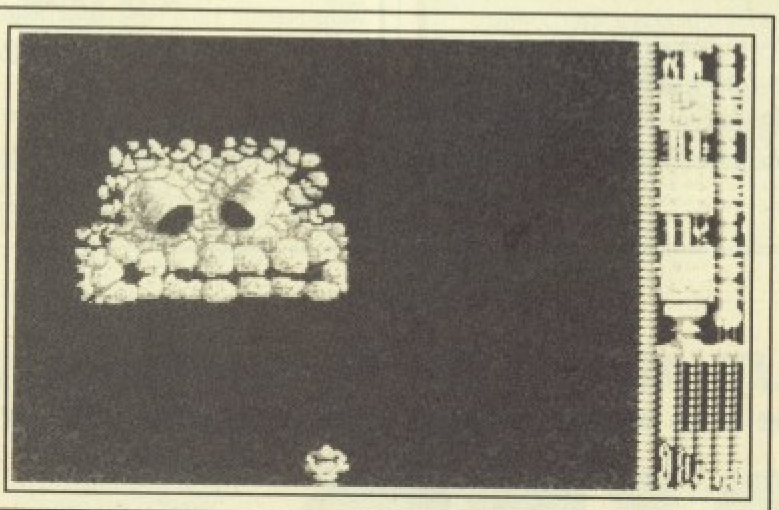
Mail Order: Mediagenic, Activision House, 23 Pond Street, Hampstead, London, NW3 2PN Consumer Enquiries: 01-431 1101
Technical Support: 0703 229694

Better Dead than ALIEN

Amiga
Electra
Price: £19.99

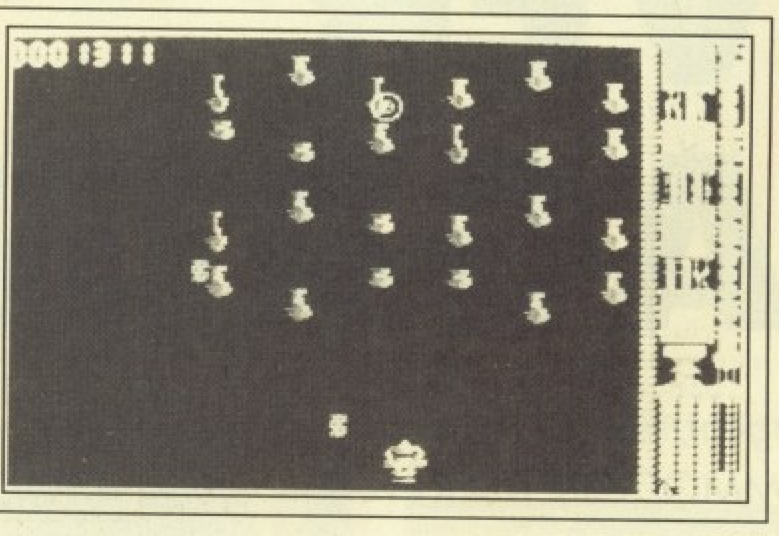
I've seen the Rambo films and I've played countless shoot-em-ups, but I've never come across anything with a plot as decidedly gung-ho as the instruction leaflet accompanying Electra's debut release, *Better Dead Than Alien*. The title itself suggests a severe case of extra-terrestial xenophobia on the programmer's part. According to the blurb, aliens are "the most revolting life forms ever to pollute the Universe and threaten to obliterate freedom and democracy". Stirring stuff indeed.

After you've opened the box and waded through all the worthless cardboard gimmicks (Including a 'Brand Zoom' 4-page comic with some of the worst artwork I've ever seen) and loaded up the disk, you'll reel in horror as you realise that *BDTA* is not the vertically scrolling shoot-em-up that the screenshots on the box led you to believe, but is in fact A *Space Invaders* clone !!!



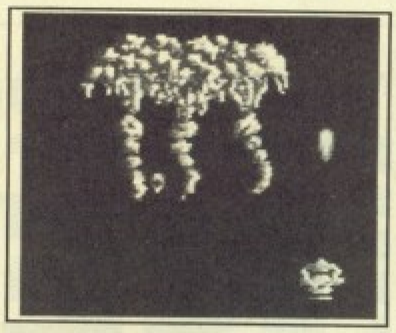
***Mike makes his debut in* BDTA . . .**

After making your initial game selections on the title screen, you are plunged straight into the first level and the first wave of nasties who, in true *Space Invaders* style, plod across the screen in formation before dropping down one line and plodding back the other way. Your spaceship (which looks suspiciously more like a crown than anything else) is positioned at the bottom of the screen and moves around under mouse control blowing away any alien scumfilth who dares to be on the same screen as you. Most of the aliens have a little 'eyeball' thingy that glows red (for some unknown reason) while there are a couple in each wave that have a *green* glowing thing, and guess what (ooh, do tell us Gaz, we can't wait!) when you shoot it, it drops a little capsule that you can pick up to upgrade your ship's weapons. Extra weapons include 'scatter bolts' that let you fire in three directions at once, the ubiquitous shields and yer aktual armour missile what can waste a whole row of alien flithbags with a single shot. Cor blimey!



Space Invaders *revisited . . .*

To provide some sort of relief between the rounds of alien-zapping tedium, every so often there are a couple of variety rounds, one of which being a simple 'destroy the mothership' affair where a large and extremely ugly alien comes flying down the screen at you and has to be hit quite a lot to be destroyed, and the other being a neat variation on the *Asteroids* theme. On this round, huge swirling rocks whizz around the screen and have to broken down piece by piece in order to finish the level. For sheer entertainment value, this was the high point of the game for me, but only because the rest of it was so boring.



Better Dead than Alien is a typical example of a game that, despite the programmers' best efforts, has totally failed to come off. The graphics, although quite pretty, are poorly animated and fall way short of the machine's potential. Sound too is poor, with no tune to speak of and although the synthesized effects are nice, they're far too sparse to have any real effect. The whole thing is very user-friendly and the mouse control is totally cack (as GP would say). The only redeeming features are the amusing gung-ho attitude of the instructions and the impressive sampled applause on the high score table. In my opinion, the programmers have concentrated more on producing a game with a sense of humour than a playable one, and the end result is little more than uninspiring.

Gary Whitta

BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN — *DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING

4

CUT THIS OUT AND GIVE IT TO YOUR NEWSAGENT

NEVER AGAIN!

Please Mr. Newsagent, reserve me a copy of the ever-popular COMMODORE USER every month.

Name ______________________

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____



IKARI WARRIORS

Elite
Price: £24.99

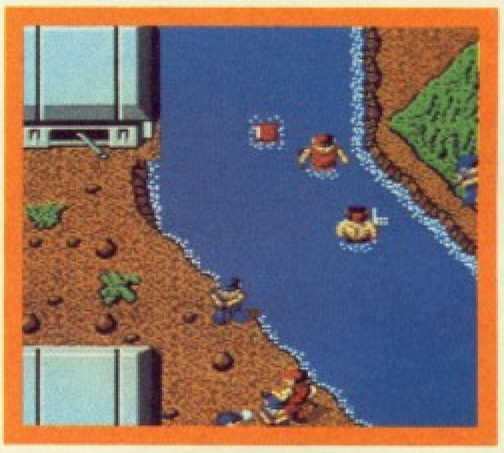
Hot on the heels of Microdeal's jolly jungle shoot-em-up romp *Leatherneck* comes the official conversion of the game that inspired it, *Ikari Warriors*, courtesy of Elite. If, when it comes to the coin-op scene, you are a pretty wised-up dude, you may as well skip the next couple of lines, while I explain to the rest of you what it's all about.

Ugly and mean super-commandos Paul and Vince's commanding officer, General Bonn, has been kidnapped by violent terrorists who are currently holding him captive in their secluded jungle hideout. Paul and Vince get some guns and grenades and fly out to the jungle, where the action begins. As you must have guessed by now, it's a vertically scrolling *Commando* variant with some extra features, the most no'iceable of these being a simultaneous two-player option.

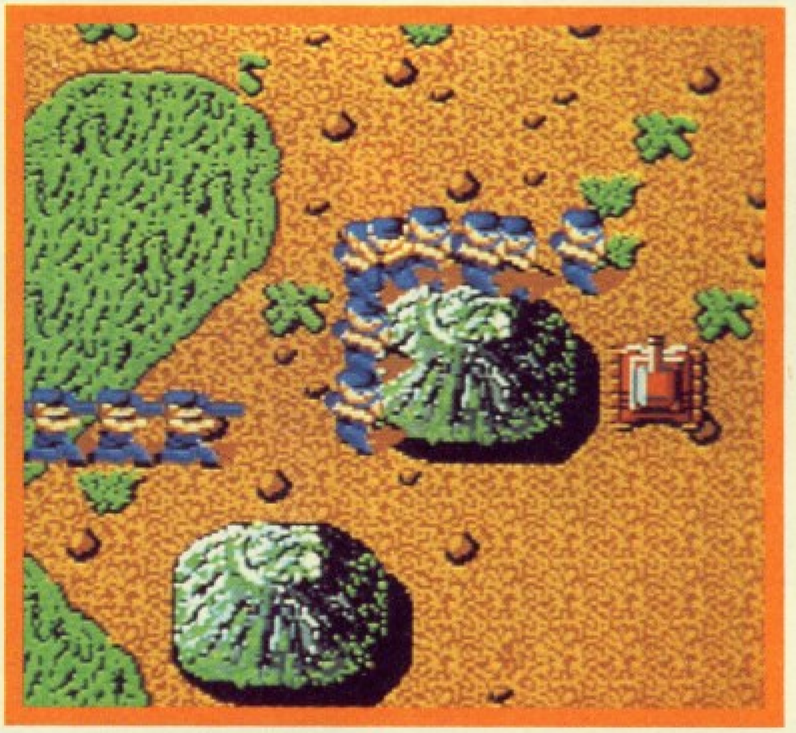
The enemy are pretty nasty guys, much more musclebound than the pathetic striplings that accost you in *Leatherneck*. Dressed in snazzy blue uniforms and baseball caps (?) they run down the screen either singularly or in groups firing their tennis ball-like bullets at you, which thankfully aren't too fast and can be dodged easily. To dispose of these troublesome goons, 99 bullets are supplied for your machine gun as well as 50 grenades that you can lob by holding down the fire button.

The jungle you traverse is graphically a lot more basic than the territory in *Leatherneck*, being a sort of desert cum jungle bordered by palm trees with buildings and bridges cropping up in later sections. Inanimate peril comes in many forms, including pillbox gun emplacements that blurt out bullets at all angles and Inca masks set into the floor that spit out bullets all over the shop. A well timed grenade shot will despatch these, along with any soldiers in the vicinity. As well as these, around half-way through each level, you'll come across large expanses of water that can only be crossed by jumping in and wading through at waist height, which slows you down considerably.

What with all these guns and goons out to get you, you may be getting the impression that the odds are stacked pretty steeply against you. To help you out a bit, it's possible to capture an enemy tank; just keep walking up the screen and a stationary tank flashing 'IN' will appear. By standing over it and holding down the fire button, you gain control of the tank and can then proceed to trundle about blowing everything in sight away with virtually no fear of getting shot. However, tank mode does have it's bijoux disadvantagettes: Tanks aren't very aquatic machines, and so it's necessary to cross a bridge (if there is one) or leave the tank behind if you want to pass. In addition, should a goon hit the tank with a grenade, it will ignite and you have only a few seconds to get out and get out of range before it explodes, sending twisted metal flying everywhere (nasty).

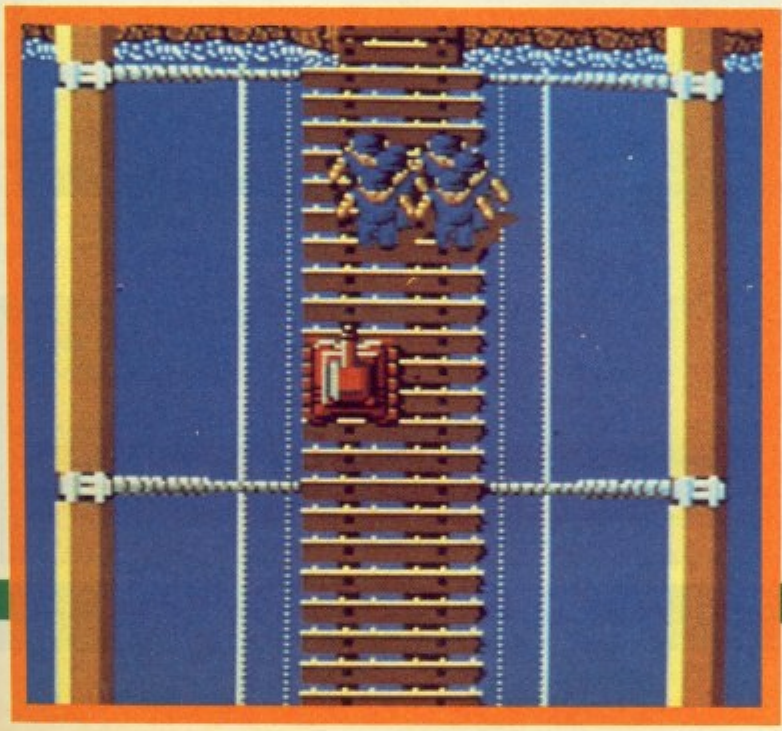


Come in, the water's lovely . . .



An ironclad warrior takes on some blue coats.

Trundling across a bridge.



Ikari Warriors is a damn good conversion — almost perfect in fact. If anything it's more enjoyable to play, as you don't have to put up with those crappy 'stump' joysticks that the coin-op (and it's sci-fi sequel *Victory Road*) were inflicted with. The graphics are well-defined and brightly coloured, and combine well with the cutesy sound effects just like its arcade daddy.

And for those who absolutely must have a comparison, *Ikari* is a much better game than *Leatherneck* and a thoroughly impressive conversion to boot. Brilliant.

Gary Whitta

IKARI WARRIORS — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	8
Audio	8
Toughness	8
Endurance	8
VFM	7

CU RATING
8

AMIGA

Fire & Forget

Titus/ Entertainment International
Price: £ .99

Following their first, and largely forgettable release, *Crazy Cars*, French software house, Titus, have now ventured into the 16-bit market once more with what appears at first sight to be the same game — only worse.

Borrowing heavily in its inspiration from the classic Atari coin-op, *Roadblasters, Fire and Forget* uses the 3D road routines from its predecessor with some tepid blasting action bolted onto this already poor foundation.

The Intergalactic Liberation Organisation have destroyed many of the Earth's major cities and are threatening to take control of the whole planet. Only the 'Thunder Master' — a heavily armed, V-16 triple turbo, four-wheel drive car — stands in the way of their plans. As commander of the world's ultimate fighting machine, it is the player's task to negotiate the major conflict areas, destroy the ILO's forces and avert a full-scale nuclear war . . .

The action takes place across six combat zones set in different locations around the world. These are accessed individually from a map selection screen which appears at the start of the game and also in between each battle.

Luckily for the Thunder Master, the ILO's forces have stationed themselves along the roadways which traverse the otherwise desolate landscapes. The route is lined with sentry posts, gun emplacements and vegetation while the road itself is littered with mines, blockades and tanks. The Thunder Master is also assaulted from the air, as helicopter gunships frequently zoom overhead spitting a barrage of lead death.

The only limitation on the TM's progress is its fuel level, which is depleted as a matter of course, and also on contact with obstructions and enemy fire. The car's ample fuel tanks are refilled, though, on collision with conical fuel cannisters which appear at intervals along the route.

Fire And Forget also offers a two-player option, where the second combatant takes control of the 'Thunder Cloud' — a small, winged craft which mimics the speed of the TM and can be guided to left and right of the screen in order to fend off attacks from enemy aircraft.

On paper, this sounds like it could be lots of fun — as indeed its arcade role model is. Unfortunately, the reality is far less appealing. The amount of obstacles to avoid and

The desert roads.



the speed at which the enemy craft appear is ludicrous: you really DO have to fire and forget, since you have no real hope of avoiding all of the oncoming objects.

The graphics are no great shakes either: the road movement is only moderately effective and the frame update on approaching objects is not particularly smooth, relying on speed to hide its deficiencies.

FIRE AND FORGET — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Video
Audio
Toughness
Endurance
Vfm

CU RATING

5



"Snow" way through.

Blasting towards the city.





"Tanks" very much.

After several frenzied and rather dissatisfying battles, *Fire And Forget*'s appeal soon wears very thin. Each combat zone is much the same as the next, bar differences in the colour scheme and a small variety in the ground-based obstacles, and the driving aspect is reduced to going at full pelt, since the car never actually leaves the road but simply slows down on contact with the rough terrain to either side.

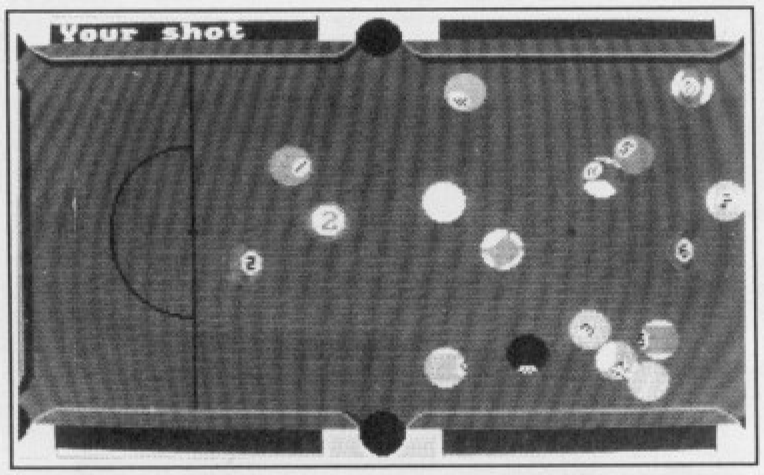
This lack of variety together with the tediously repetitive blasting, conspire to make *Fire And Forget* a real boredom-inducer. And great news: Titus' next release, entitled *Off Shore Warrior* looks like *Fire And Forget* on water — I can hardly wait . . .

Steve Jarratt

Obstacles galore.



PUB POOL



The opening break.

Pub Pool
Amiga
Price: £9.99

Oh dear, Mastertronic must seriously be running out of ideas in their software development department to have released this. Not only is Pool one of the most boring and pointless games that you can convert, it's been proven time and time again that it doesn't work when you do convert it. Alas, Mastertronic have gone and done it anyway and have come up with a pretty mediocre offering.

After reading through the compulsory instruction screens (which only echo everything you've just read in the manual) you are presented with the standard birds-eye view of the table that sits longways across the screen. There's nothing revolutionary about the control mode either, except instead of a cross hair, you are given a replica of the cue ball with which to determine exactly where your ball is going to go. Initially of course, this is aimed at the pack of seven spots, seven stripes and the black.

After positioning your cue ball (which you have only 9 seconds to do) the view switches to show your right hand on the pool table in the 'bridge' position with the cue sliding along it. You view the cue in much the same way as you view the jousting lance in *Defender of the Crown*. From here you can wiggle the cue around and therefore decide what sort of spin you're going to put on the ball, be it topspin, sidespin, screw etc. For a more accurate display of exactly of how the ball is going to react when you hit it, a series of graphs are provided in the top-lefthand corner of the screen to indicate the various amounts of spin, strength and time (yes, you only get ten seconds here as well) all of which are determined by movements of the mouse. Finally, you hit the mouse button to take your shot and the view flicks back to the table where your shot is then automatically played. If you manage to pot a ball, you then have to go about potting the other six balls in the same 'suit'. Should you miss (which you'll do quite a lot) the play reverts to your opponent. In one player mode, the shot selection screen is missed out as the computer takes his(her?) shot straight away.

Should any player hit a ball that's not one of his 'suit', or accidentally pots the cue ball, a foul shot is declared (with some dodgy sampled speech) and the opponent is given two visits to the table plus a free ball. Play continues like this until somebody manages to pot all the balls in his suit followed by the black, but should anybody pot the black by accident before all the other balls have been pocketed, he immediately loses.

What more is there for me to say? I've described the control method,

WORLD

Mastertronic
Amiga
Price: £9.99

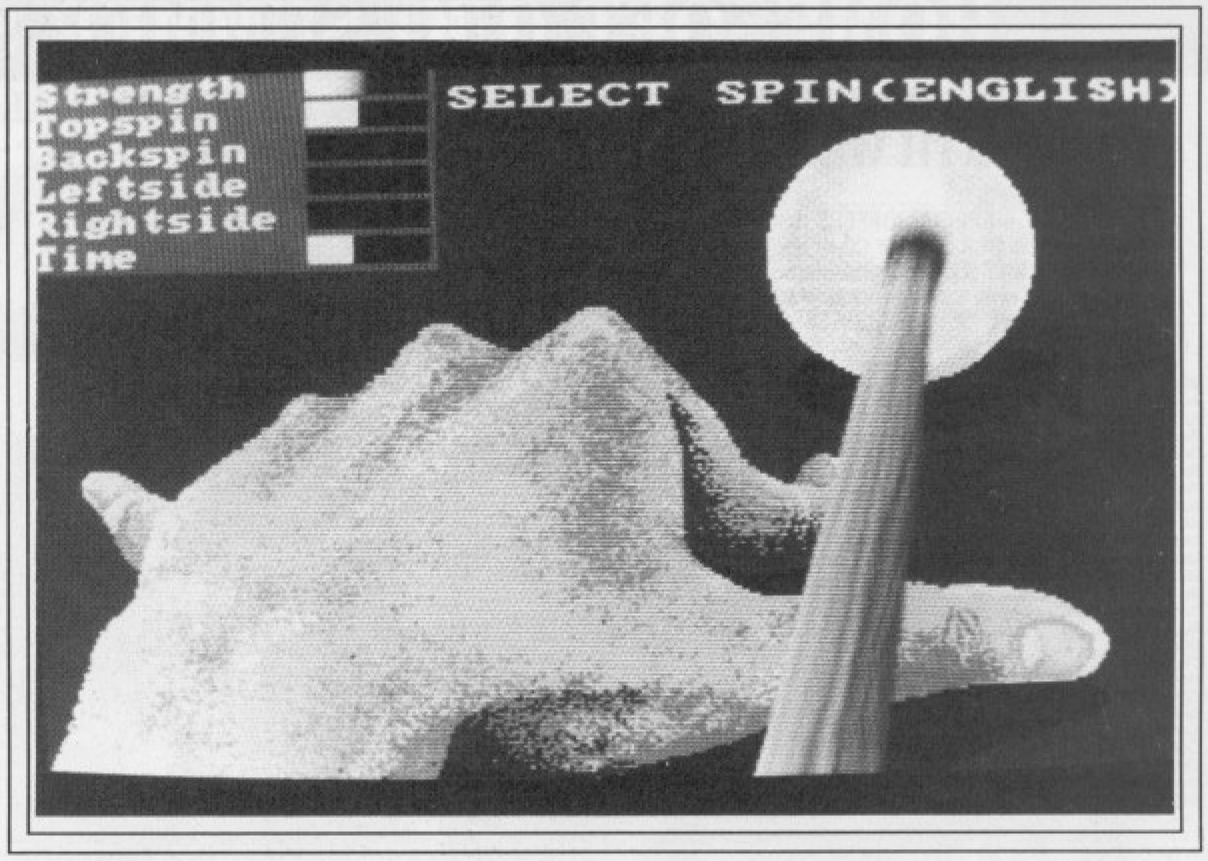
Avid readers of CU will remember that not too long ago, a rather pleasant cheapo from Mastertronic by the name of *180* appeared on the scene. Being the excellent simulation of darts that it was, and costing only three quid, it was duly awarded our coveted 'cheapo of the month' award. Not wanting to leave 16-bitters out in the cold, Mastertronic have converted it onto the Amiga and retitled it *World Darts*.

Upon loading you are presented with a neat opening sequence in which three darts land with a sampled 'thok' into the treble twenty. A fat northern commentator appears and exclaims "Arcadia presents World Darts", as it's supposedly been converted from the Arcadia Super-Select coin-op that houses 4 games in one machine (including that ole fave *Xenon*), although I have never personally come across it. After selecting the type of game you want from the option screen (you can either compete against a pal or go for the world title, playing against three computer controlled opponents in turn) you take the arrows in hand and begin play.

The board itself takes up about two thirds of the screen, with the far-right hand portion housing the scoreboard. To throw your dart you guide a large hand about the screen with the joystick until it points to the part of the board you want to hit and then press fire. It may sound easy but I can assure you it ain't. It's impossible to keep your hand totally still as it is constantly moving, so you simply have to release the dart as the hand passes over the required segment required. Add to this a 15 second time limit to throw each dart and it results in a highly difficult (but not frustrating) dart-throwing technique which takes a lot of practice to perfect (having played both this and *180* though, I found the



A bit of topspin.



given you the rules of the game, what else is there for me to do. . . . Ah, yes, I can moan about how bad the game is. For a start, the graphics are nowhere near as good as they could have been, for although the balls are animated well enough, it can sometimes be difficult to work out if a ball is a spot or a stripe if it stops at an awkward angle. Sound is on a par with the graphics (not very good) with the worst piece of speech I've ever heard on any computer, and considering all the Amiga has to say is 'Foul Shot'', it's obvious that it's been a bit of a rush job.

But far worse than all this are the appallingly bad logistics. It's impossible to play a proper game, because the balls never go where you want them to. I was experimenting with spin, and positioned the cue ball to the far left of the target ball so that it would roll to the right, but against all laws of physics, the ball went off to the left! Power is a joke, as I found many a time that if a cue ball that has lost all of it's momentum just snicks another ball as it stops, that ball will often shoot across the table at top speed. The computer offers no contest and just opts to hit whatever ball is closest, which means foul shots occur frequently. In fact I could go on for a few more pages just picking out all the faults that *Pool* has, but being the nice and considerate guy that I am (ahem) I won't because I don't want to embarrass the programmer any further. All I will say is that *Pool* is unadulterated twaddle that no self-respecting Amiga games player should own.

Gary Whitta

AMIGA

PUB POOL — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

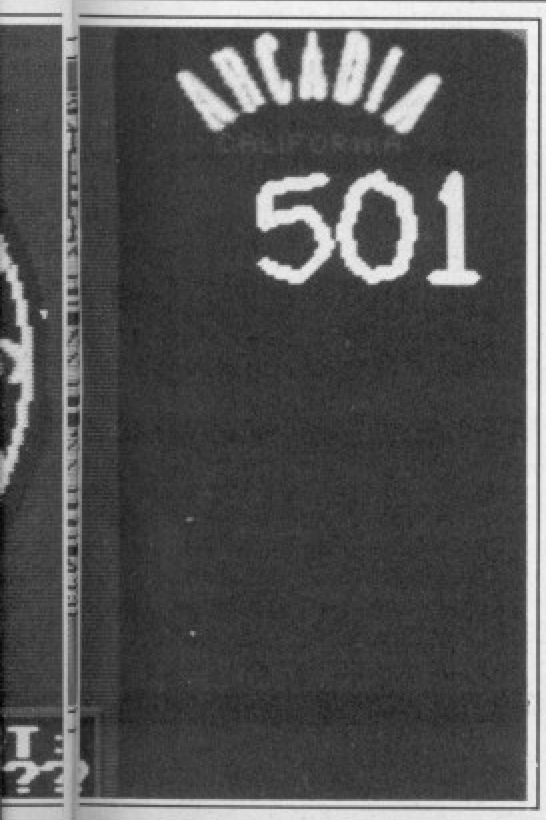
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Video
Audio
Toughness
Endurance
VFM

CU RATING

3

DARTS



'diagonals only' method of *180* a better one).

After throwing each dart, another hand passes over the scoreboard and chalks up the score. After all three darts have been thrown, the computer does a quick bit of subtraction and tells you how many more points you require. As in the original, there's a handy table on the inlay that saves you from having to get a calculator to work out what you need to 'check out'.

"Step right up."

When your turn's finished, the computer opponent steps up to the oche. This was a real let-down for me, as it's nowhere near as good as the original. Whereas in *180* there was a typically bad piece of pubby music played along in the background as the computer throws his darts, in *WD* it's all done in complete silence. On top of this, the player and the backdrop are both poorly defined and animated. Very dull indeed.

What more can you say about a game like *World Darts*? The first to zero from 501 is the winner and proceeds to the next round. Win all three and you are presented with a platter or trophy or whatever. The graphics have been well done (except in the opponents' throwing sequence) and sound is good, albeit sparse, with the same bouncy soundtrack as the original. Not surprisingly, the speech has been greatly enhanced. Although it doesn't fully live up to it's predecessor, it's an enjoyable game in it's own right and worth a look, if only for the appallingly bad artwork on the packaging.

Gary Whitta

AMIGA

WORLD DARTS — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Video
Audio
Toughness
Endurance
VFM

CU RATING

7

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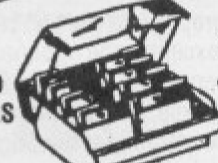
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Zoom

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AMIGA

Amidar returns . . .



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Who's Zooming who?



Long gone are the days of the *Amidar*-type game, when life's beauty was its simplicity. When all a wandering gamer had to do was roam around a maze filling in boxes, by collecting dots or some other similar method. But then a voice came out of nowhere, a beam of light half-blinded me, and . . . in the oldest traditions of the immaculate conception it appeared on my desk, bearing only one word . . . *Zoom*.

Sorry about the rather OTT intro, but I just love anything that smacks of nostalgia. The aim of *Zoom* is to fill in the grid of boxes by going over the lines that make up the grid. When you go over each line it changes colour, and when a box is completed it does the same. As any player who was around during the era of these games will inform you the best strategy is not to go about the grid doing it box by box, but instead to try and do it by swooping along all the long lines, thus giving you less ground to cover, also increasing your chances of earning a nice fat time bonus.

Of course my precious little chums, no-one is going to bring out a game without the grim subject of death in it. In this game it is available in many forms. Currently the most popular is death by the little nasties that roam around the maze intent on robbing you of one of your three lives. There is, however, a way for you to stand up for your rights as a yellowish spherical object! And that is best done dropping one of the three bombs you are given per life, in order to stop in its tracks whichever particular evil is after you.

Other forms of death include holes that appear in the grid, and surprise 'bonuses' which are more like forfeits really.

The beauty of this game are all the little kinks it has that all the previous games in this style did not have. It has lots of little bonuses such as extra points, invincibility, and level jumping. But be careful — as I have already mentioned many of these so-called bonuses can backfire in your face!

It's hard to say what type of dude would really enjoy *Zoom*; personally I think it's absolutely brilliant. Not too complex but still enjoyable, no really stunning graphics or sound but still very good ones that are clear and attractive. The whole game has a really concentrated feeling of slickness about it. But although I may rave you may wish to think carefully before buying, as this type of very basic gameplay may only appeal to the very basic minded — like myself, for instance.

Ferdy Hamilton

ZOOM — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	9
Audio	8
Toughness	8
Endurance	8
VFM	6

CU RATING

8

CARRIER COMMAND

Amiga
Rainbird
Price: £24.95

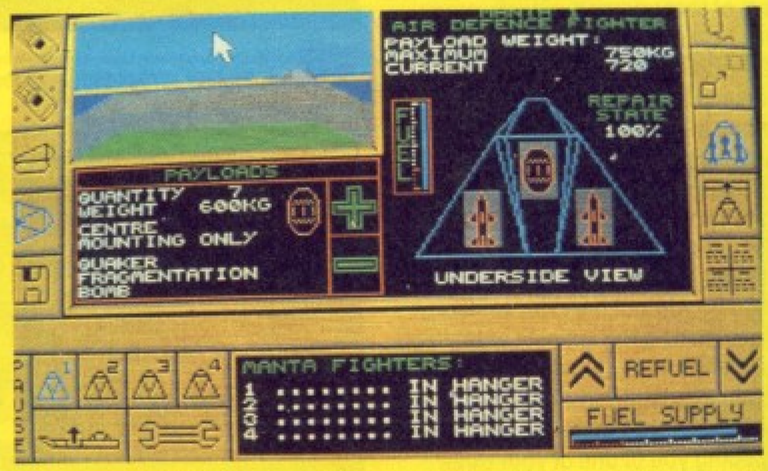
The year is 2166. During a desperate mission to find a new source of energy to replenish Earth's dwindling supplies, the Fuel Hunter Ship SS Delta accidentally stumbles upon a large colony of previously undiscovered islands in the South Pacific, each with at least one extremely powerful volcano situated on it. Scientists decide that these islands could be used to provide a form of volcanic energy and so a plan is devised to colonise these islands for the purpose of tapping their energy. In addition, two huge aircraft carriers, ACC Epsilon and ACC Omega are built to maintain and defend the islands.

However, shortly after the programme begins ACC Omega is 'hijacked' by a terrorist organisation who threaten to use it to methodically destroy the islands unless a huge ransom is paid. The only way the terrorists can be stopped is to use the other carrier, ACC Epsilon to gain control of all the islands and defeat Omega. You have control of that carrier.

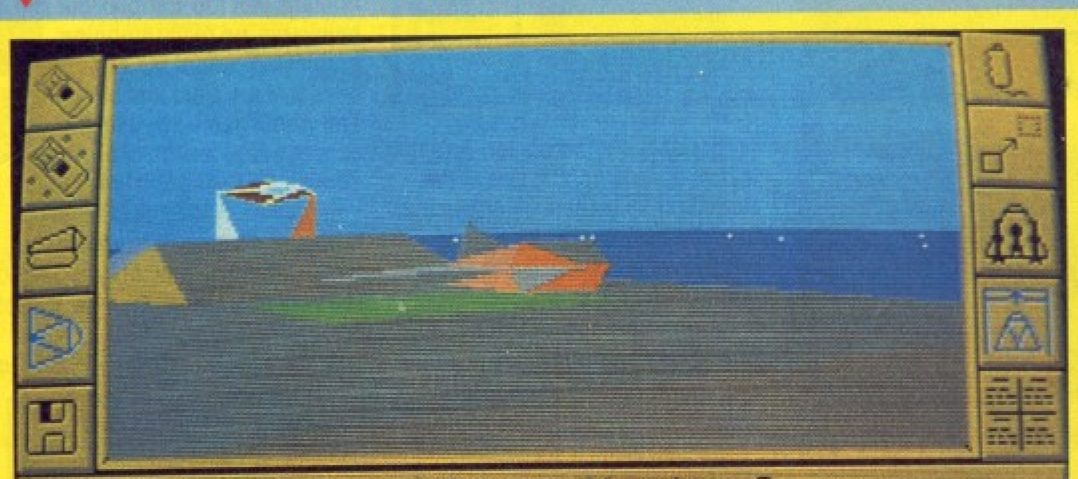
The entire complex of the 64 islands, and all that goes on about them is portrayed using filled 3D graphics. For the most part, you

CARRIER COMMAND	DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY
Video	9
Audio	9
Toughness	9
Endurance	9
VFM	9
CU RATING	**9**

Arm your fighters before takeoff.



Manta 2 warms up on the flight deck . . .



. . . Takes off . . .



view the world about you through the viewing tower of your carrier, which is moored off the coast of the home island, Vulcan, the only friendly island. By glancing at your region map, you'll see that you are based in the bottom left hand corner, with Omega and all its occupied islands at top right, and a number of neutral (green) islands in between, and it is these islands that you must colonise with your own forces before you can set about tackling Omega.

To capture an unoccupied island, simply set your carrier's course for it, set sail, and when it arrives, plant a Command Centre Builder (ACCB) on it. To do this, a Walrus AAV, a kind of amphibious tank craft must be loaded with an ACCB and then sent onto the island where it drops it, causing a Command Centre to be built before your very eyes. There are three kinds of Command Centre: Factory, which produces equipment for the carrier; Resource, which mines raw materials for the Factories to use; and Defence, used for protecting the rest of your island network. In this manner of colonising islands, you can expand your supply network to support your carrier and become more of a fighting force.

Remember that all the time you are expanding your network, the Omega is expanding too, and it's when your two networks meet in the middle that the action starts. Now your Walrus craft must be used for battle purposes in conjunction with your airborne Manta fighters both to defend your network and take over hostile ones for your own use. Capturing an enemy island is no mean feat, and involves sending your precious Mantas on seek and destroy missions on hostile Command centres, so be sure to arm your ships with the correct weaponry while in dock before launching. Even then they won't last long if they're not supported by Epsilon's onboard laser and missile defences. Only by whittling away at the enemies network bit by bit and then taking on the Omega head to head can you hope to succeed. There's so much more about *Carrier Command* that I could tell you about, Air Traffic Control, repairing damaged systems, decoy drones, Virus bombs and so on, but I just don't have the space to do so.

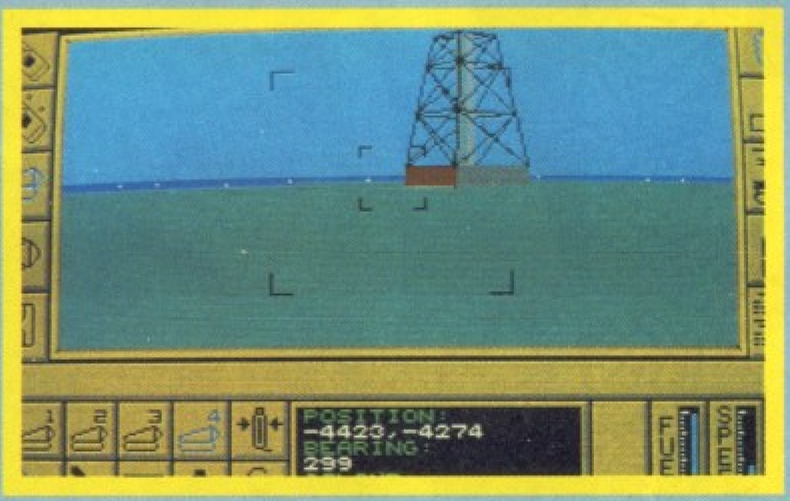
Carrier Command is the breakthrough in 16-bit gaming that we've been waiting for. It heralds a whole new era of interactive strategy/action gaming. As for the graphics, the term "state of the art" is just not strong enough. Everything has been drawn and animated so exquisitely it's hard to believe that there would be room in the memory for anything else, but a superb digitised title-tune has been included as well as atmospheric effects. The whole thing is so user-friendly that the at first bewildering array of icons through which the entire game is controlled will become second-nature within an hour. There's even an 'action game' option for shoot-em-up freaks and an extended mix of the theme tune on an accompanying audio cassette.

All in all, *Carrier Command* is one of the best games *ever* to appear on the Amiga and sets standards that other companies will take some time to match. It's the closest thing yet to the perfect game.

Gary Whitta



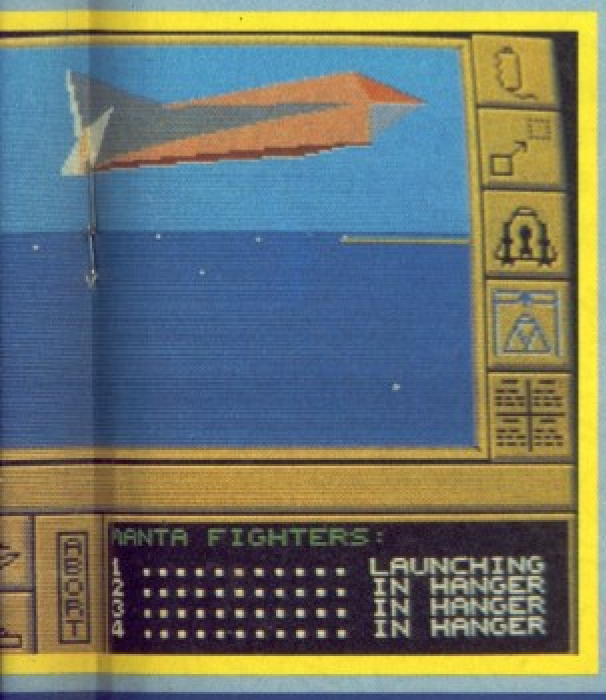
Can Gaz land Manta 2 safely?



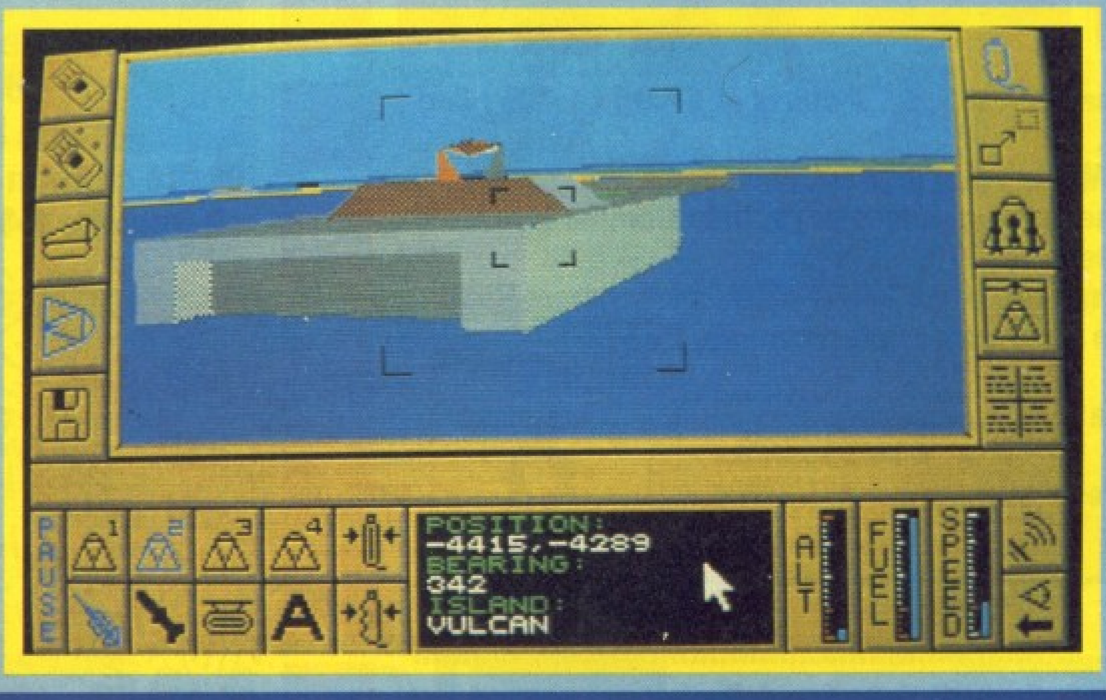
Vulcan's Comms Tower (as seen by a Walrus AAV).



Damage Control says the lift's OK.



. . . and spins round for an aerial view of the carrier.



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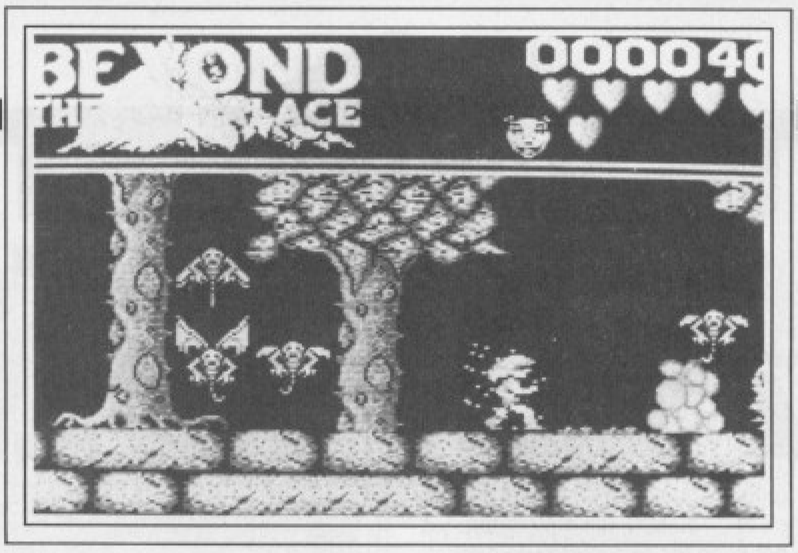
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Elite
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▲ *Slash them evil minions!*

BEYOND THE ICE PALACE

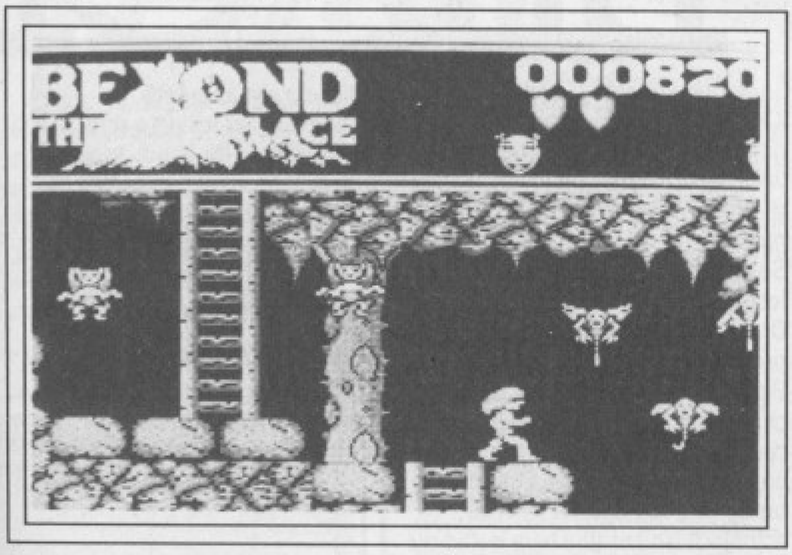
Gosh, Elite certainly are a bunch of busy little beavers. What with *Buggy Boy* and *Ikari Warriors* arriving almost on top of one another, and *Space Harrier* and *A Question Of Sport* promised soon, you'd think that they wouldn't have the time for yet another release, but not. *Beyond The Ice Palace* has absolutely no coin-op or TV relatives at all, which at least gives an excuse for the presence of a feeble plot. Once upon a time, an evil spirit burnt down the houses of all the woodcutters who lived in this big forest, and the only way to send this evil bloke back to where he came from would be to send a lone warrior into his lair to destroy him.

Corny as that may be, Elite have produced a rather good semi-revamp of their old 8-bit hit *Ghosts 'n' Goblins.* It's a sideways-on arcade adventure. The hero (the one with the blonde barnet) gallavants through Evil's lair, bumping off the various nasties that attack him with a variety of weapons, including a feeble mace-like thing, daggers and swords. Nasties normally attack in waves, but some (and generally the most deadly) come at you on their own, for example the shambling mutated henchmen who throw daggers at you, the wolfmen (on later levels) and the most annoying of all, a vicious little demon that appears from nowhere and kills you without giving much chance to escape.

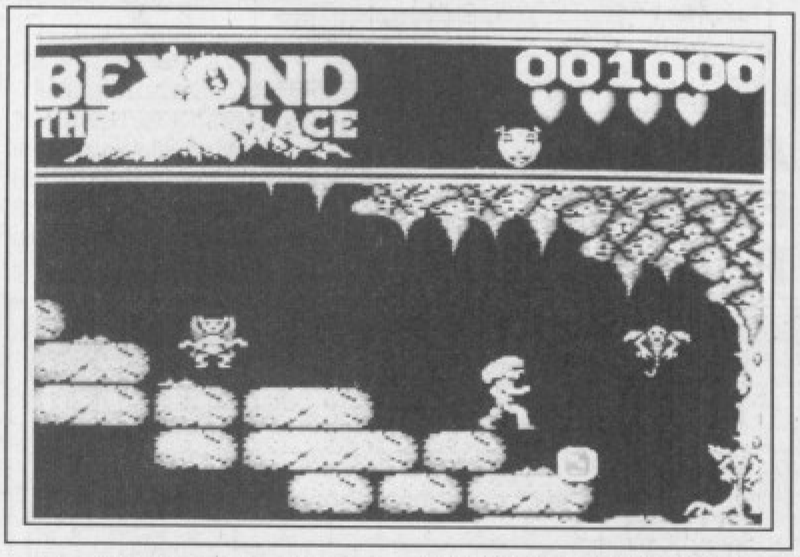
To make your life easier, an original 'smart bomb' feature is provided: by pressing space (or whatever key you prefer to define it as) you can launch a large spectre with a smiling face that buzzes around destroying all the nasties on screen. A good idea in theory, but not so good in practice as you have to wait a couple of seconds for it to appear on screen, and by then you're normally dead anyway.

Toughness is a major problem with *Ice Palace*. Even though you get eight lives, the game is so tough to play they'll all be gone before you get very far. To make things worse, a lot of the game depends on luck rather than skill, and you'll often find yourself in situations where you can only hope to get out alive. This rather poor game design combines with the over-difficult gameplay to produce an overall effect that's less than pleasing.

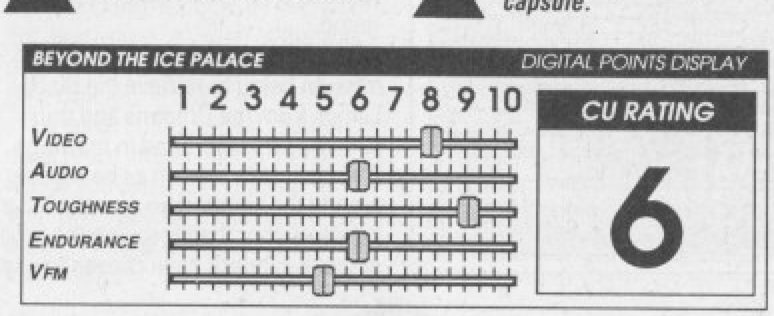
That said, Elite have worked hard to produce graphics that are actually worthy of the Amiga and it shows. The main hero sprite has been superbly designed and animated, and as such runs very smoothly and realistically. The aliens are excellent, very reminiscent of the nasties from Psygnosis' *Barbarian* (but they're animated a hell of a lot better) and explode very pleasingly in a shower of multi-coloured pixels. Unfortunately, the sound doesn't live up to it's potential and consists only of a weak soundtrack and shallow effects.



▲ *Which way now, Blondie?*



▲ *Hey! It's a power-up capsule.*



Overall, the excellent graphics *just* about make up for the mediocre gameplay, and the spirit's lair is sufficiently large to provide a challenge, both to hardened gamers and mappers, who should have a whale of a time trying to get all this down on paper. Not a bad game, but I get the feeling that an Amiga owner who splashes out 25 quid on this may feel just a teensy bit cheated.

Gary Whitta

AMIGA

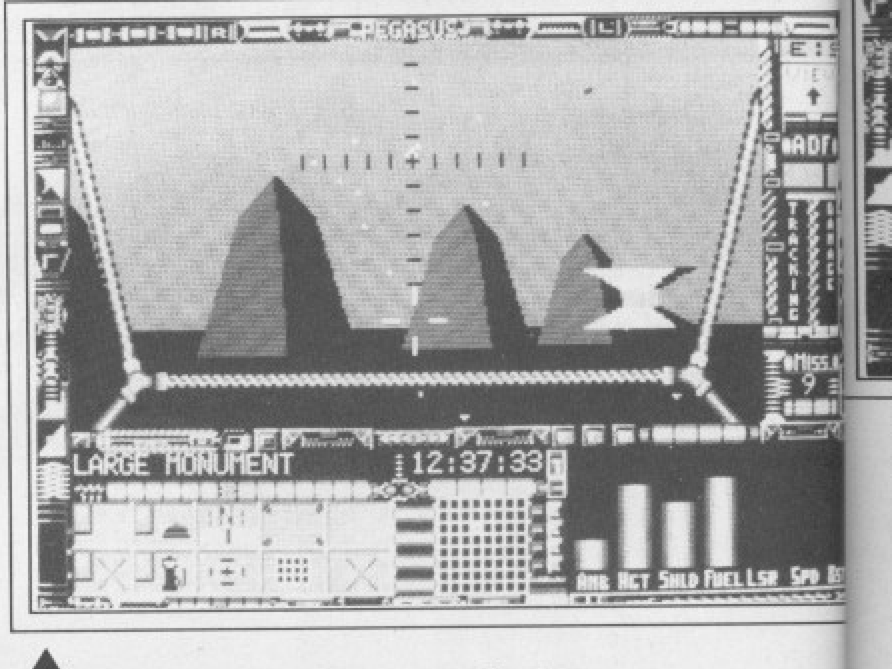
PHANTASM

Phantasm
Exocet
Price: £19.99

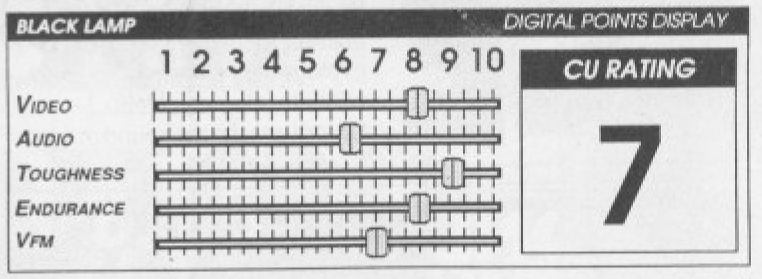
Ooh, this looks good! *Phantasm* comes in a nice shiny box with a pic of a scantily clad girly watching some alien spaceships blow up buildings. Opening the box reveals a cute little sign saying 'Do not disturb — Mission in Progress' that you can hang on your door. What a novel marketing gimmick!

Unfortunately, a much better and more reliable way to sell a lot of games is to make sure the actual game is a good one, and Exocet software obviously aren't aware of this yet. Loading the disk up reveals quite a blatant rip off of that ol' CRL classic *Tau Ceti*, the only difference between the two games being that *Phantasm* doesn't have any strategic gameplay elements, and as such is nowhere near as playable as the game it's seeking to emulate.

After entering your name and the exact time (why???) you can select a combat zone from a neat piccy of the planet you'll be desecrating. You're then plunged straight into the game proper. You view the outside world from your cockpit window while all the information necessary to playing the game, such as fuel left, damage, compass directions and time is displayed. Outside, typically *Tau Ceti*-ish aliens zoom by firing at you (they look EXACTLY like the hunter patrol craft from *Tau Ceti*) and these can be quickly done away with with either a burst of laser fire or a homing missile (of which you have



Termite hills abound in the tiresome Phantasm.

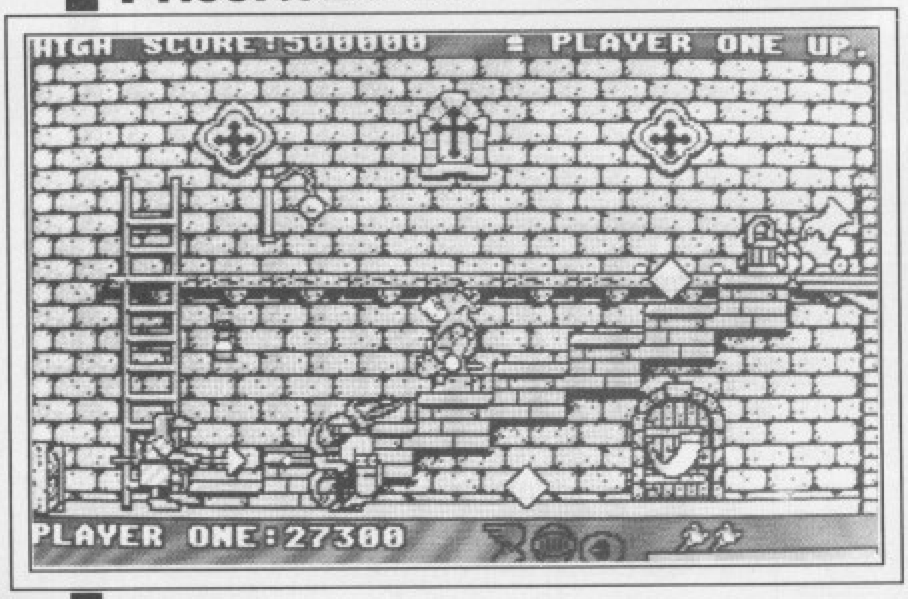


BLACK

Amiga
Firebird
Price: £19.99

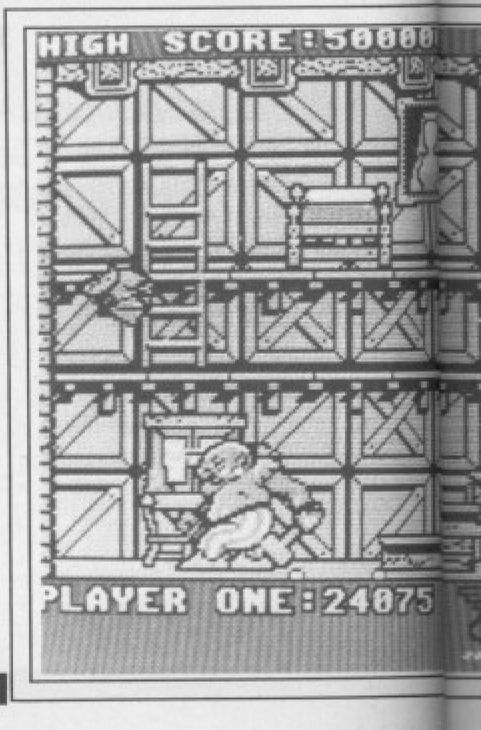
No doubt about it, Firebird's *Black Lamp* has one of the corniest plots I've read in a long time. Jolly Jack the Jester has always had eyes only for the gorgeous Princess Grizelda, but King Maxim, being the grumpy old git that he is, has always refused Jack the Princess's hand in marriage, due to Jack being little more than a medieval Jim Bowen. So all hope of wedded bliss seems lost for Jack until one day a gang of Dragons come along and nick the prestigious Crown Jewels — the Black Lamps — which cast a spell over all the animals in the kingdom, causing them to attack the innocent population of Allegoria. Sounds pretty ho hum, doesn't it? Well actually it isn't at all. There is, hiding inside this Amiga follow-up to the 64 release, a very nicely executed game.

You take on the role of Jack, your mission being to retrieve the Black Lamps from the Dragons and thus earn the princess' hand in marriage. You view Jack side-on as he plods around the kingdom in search of the lamps. Rather than scrolling the screens, Firebird have chosen to use a flick-screen approach, so whenever Jack leaves a screen, you are presented for about a second with a close-up of him before he appears on the next screen. As well as exits at the left and right of each screen, it's also possible to walk in and out of screens through doors.

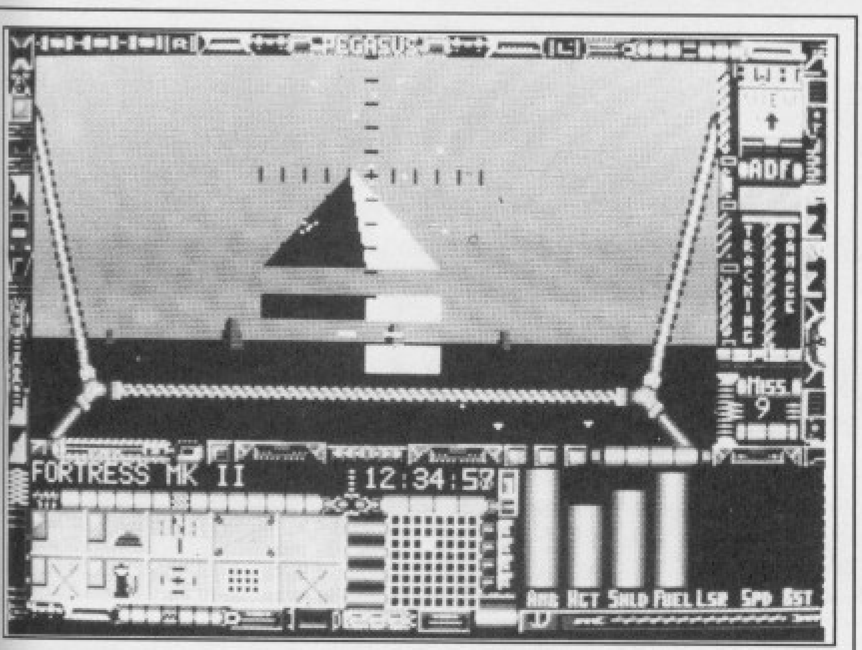


Deep in the bowels of the castle.

Don't mess with the ogre!



A triangle shaped thing.





nine). The landscape features come in the form of Beacons (mutant roadlights) and Supply Dumps, where you can refuel and arm, as well as a couple of others that look like outsize dog-jobbies (and probably are).

The ultimate aim of *Phantasm* is to destroy eight 'reconstitutions' dotted around the planet, but to be perfectly honest, I couldn't do any of them. Not because it's too tough (in fact the skill levels are not much different to one another) but because the gameplay is so incredibly tedious that I gave up in sheer boredom.

As if Exocet wanted to rub salt into my already serious wounds, they've provided the lamest game scenario I've ever read in my life. Apparently you are on the run from the dreaded Poll Tax collector, and the only way to get away from him is to fall asleep and have dreams about space adventures. Then one day you are whisked off to an alien planet to wage terrible war against a bunch of mutants, where the game begins. This is not a joke, this is actually what's written on the instruction leaflet that comes with the game. Isn't it PATHETIC? A game with a plot that bad doesn't deserve to have a good game wasted on it, so at least Exocet have remedied that by accompanying it with *Phantasm*.

I suppose I'd better complete my moaning session by criticising the graphics and sound, which for the most part are pretty dull. While the static graphics on the mission selection screens and on the cockpit display are quite snazzy, the animation is very shoddy and the sprites haven't been at all well defined. The title screen and in-game music is irritating, and although you can toggle it off and just have the FX, the instructions don't tell you how to, so you have to fumble around with the keyboard until you find the right key.

So, to sum up, *Phantasm* is not very good at all. If you know what's good for you, you won't waste your hard-earned readies on this. Instead you'll buy something decent like *Buggy Boy* or *Leatherneck*, Wont't you?

Gary Whitta

PHANTASM — *DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING

4

KLAMP

Of course, all the wildlife in the kingdom who are under the dragons' spell will attack you without a moment's thought, and they come in many and varied guises. Nasties include buzzards, werewolves, bats, dragonflies, crows and glowing imps who prod you with their forks (ouch). Luckily Jack has been bestowed with some magic spells by his ol' china, Pratweezle the Wizard. Not only does he have five lives, he can also fire devastating laser bolts out of his keks. Real trouser tremblers they are.

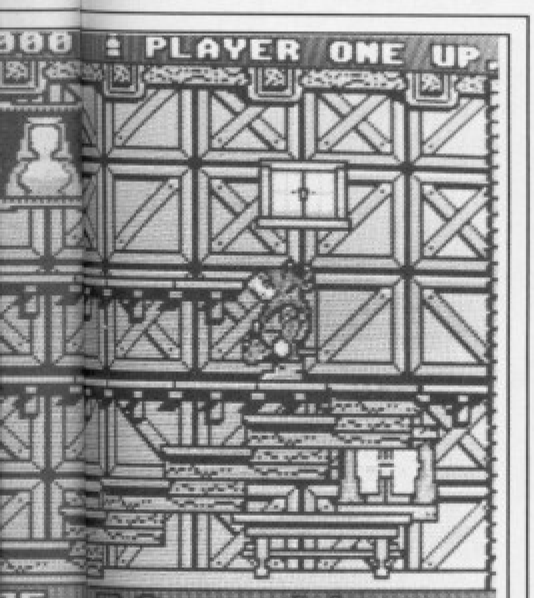
To find the lamps you need to drop into the treasure chests to complete the game, you'll have to go hunting through the kingdom, which means you can take in some of the beautifully detailed scenery along the way. There are serene rustic villages, dank castle interiors and some nice forestland. Don't dally too long, though, as the nasties are after you every step of the way, depleting your energy whenever they can.

To make things easier, several objects are littered along the way which you can collect to help boost your progress. By picking up a musical instrument, you can increase your 'bounce factor' substantially and thereby protect yourself from harm when falling too far off a precipice (there's platforms and levels to jump on all over the place), while magical armour stops your energy from being depleted for a while.

In order to obtain all the lamps, you'll need to battle the Dragons themselves who guard some of the Black Lamps. This is achieved by firing your trouser laser at the vulnerable parts of their body, while all the time dodging their fireballs.

I was very impressed by *Black Lamp*. Unlike a lot of Amiga games these days, this really does manage to provide a long term challenge that arcade-adventurers and mappers alike should revel in. Well worth a look or a splurge, even.

Gary Whitta





Jack meets some meddlesome minions.

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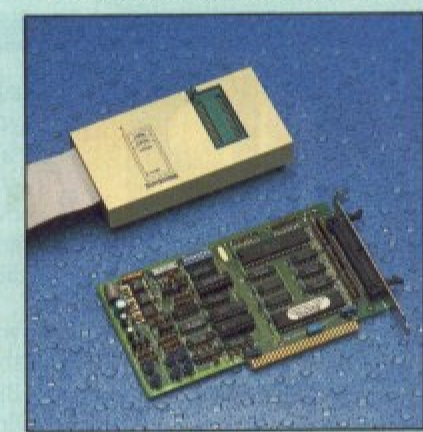
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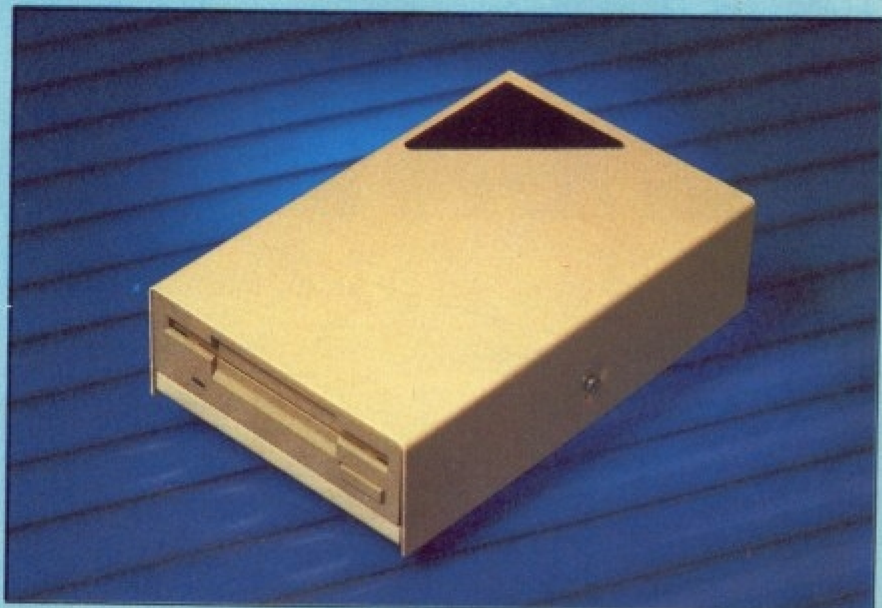
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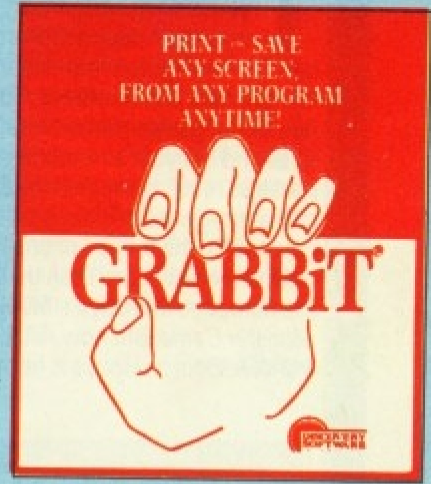


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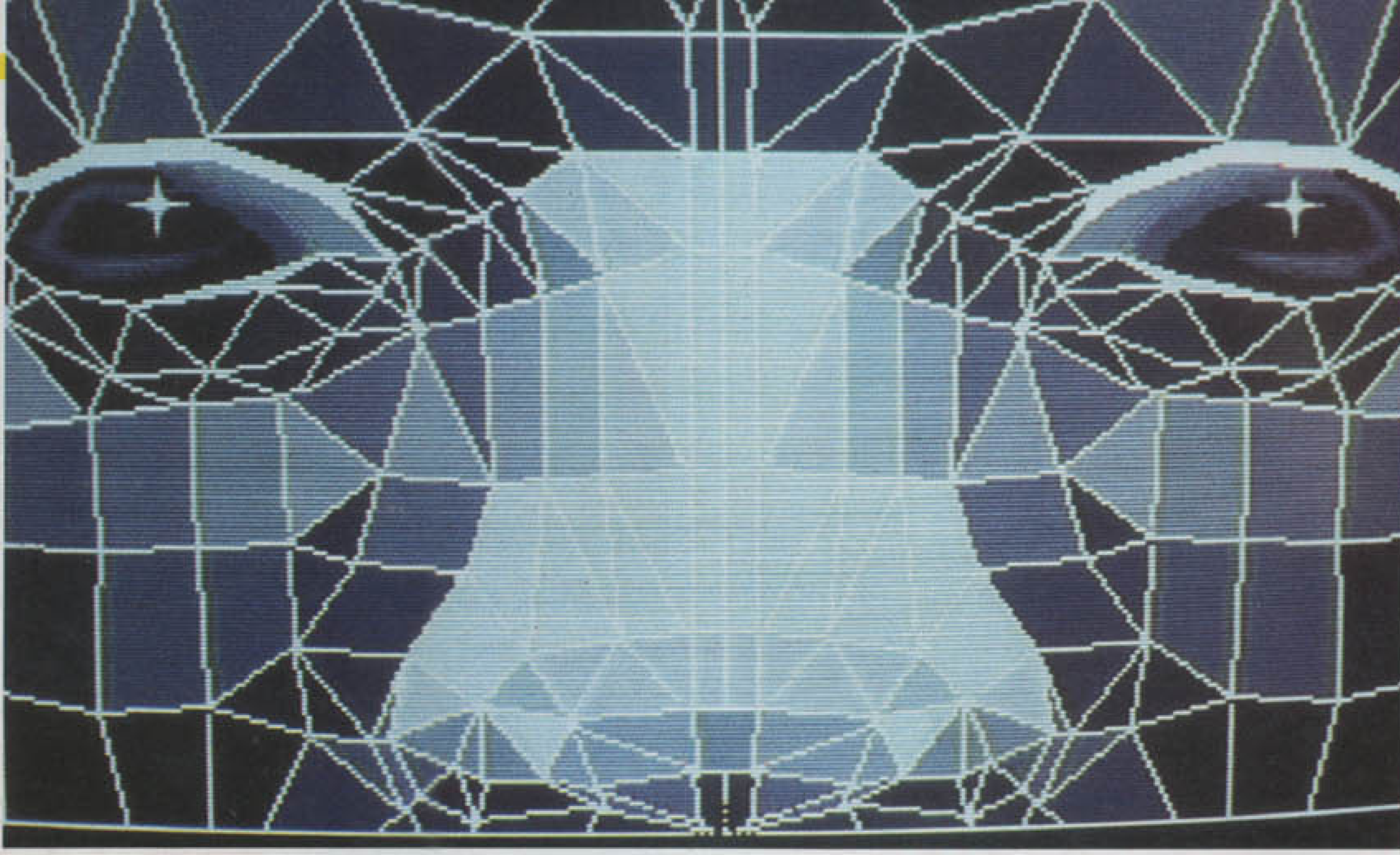
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PHOTON PAINT

Micro Illusions/ Activision £69.99



Bazbo Soft's *Photon Paint* — distributed through Micro Illusions/Activision — takes full advantage of the Amiga's HAM (Hold And Modify) mode, allowing up to 4,096 colours on-screen at the same time, whilst also providing an array of real-time drawing functions.

This package has received quite a good press of late, but after struggling with the latest addition to the rapidly growing circle of Amiga art utilities, I can only sugget that other reviewers were seduced by the impressive HAM pictures included with the program, or simply stunned by the huge array of colours to play with and the clever brush manipulation features.

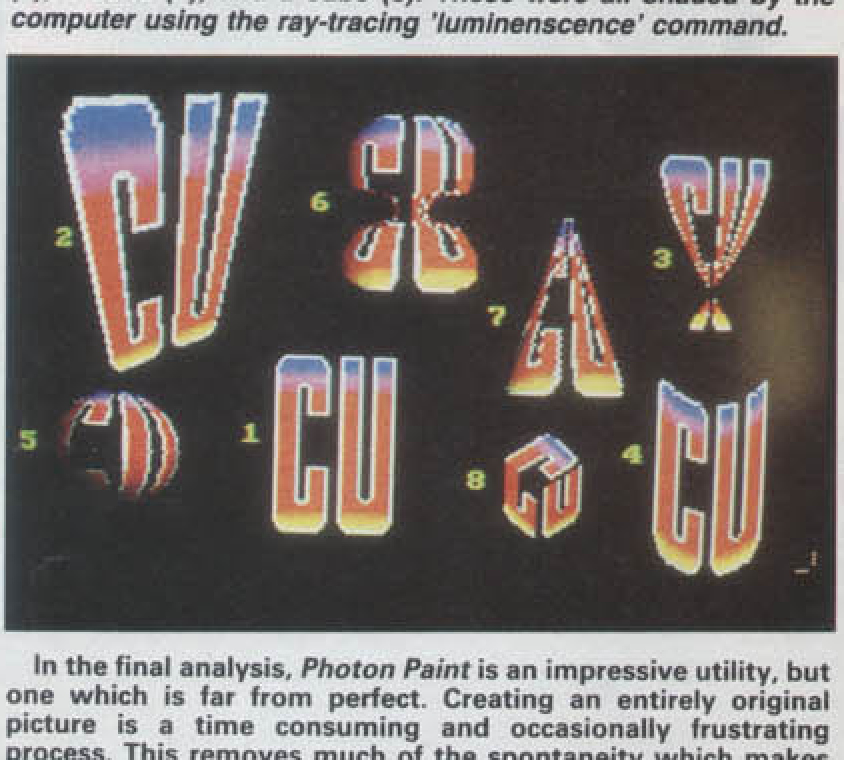
These 3D surface mapping routines (see pic) allow a section of artwork — or 'brush' — to be wrapped around a tube, ball, cone, ellipse, cube or freehand object, and to be shaded accordingly by a ray-traced 'luminescence' command. Some clever effects can be obtained, but serious applications are really quite limited. The package also allows the flat 2D brush to be re-sized, bent, twisted, and tilted in three dimensions.

Alongside these amazing devices though, the package has some real failings: the ever-important magnify mode is clumsy to use, and you have no way of finding the RGB value of pixels already coloured. When having so many different shades to manage, this proves extremely annoying; tidying up a shaded, surface-mapped brush is made incredibly difficult by having to match the computer-defined colours by eye.

Photon Paint's HAM calculations are centred around 16 base colours which are then modified to produce the remaining colours in the picture. Occasionally, these calculations give rise to 'colour fringes', where a separate edge of a different colour appears next to the original. These are only avoidable by careful planning of the base palette and can be extremely annoying when encountered, spoiling an otherwise clean piece of artwork.

Indeed, the co-ordination and use of over 4,000 colours proves to be a slow and often laborious process. There are plenty of lengthy calculations to sit through, loads of disk accessing and even more disk swapping to be endured. This is most apparent when attempting to save or load your artwork: on occasions, up to six disk changes were needed in order to bring up a picture. Needless to say, an extra external disk drive is recommended.

Your actual CU logo (1) with some additional colouration for effect. This was grabbed to form a brush and then 'tilted' in three dimensions (2), twisted (3) and bent (4). The CU brush was also wrapped around a ball (5), a symmetrical freehand object (6), a cone (7), and a cube (8). These were all shaded by the computer using the ray-tracing 'luminenscence' command.



In the final analysis, *Photon Paint* is an impressive utility, but one which is far from perfect. Creating an entirely original picture is a time consuming and occasionally frustrating process. This removes much of the spontaneity which makes art so enjoyable; I'd much rather work quickly in 32 colours than slowly in 4,096.

Steve Jarratt

the SENTINEL

Now that you've had enough time to get well and truly bogged down with Geoff Crammonds' surreal concept, Gary Whitta provides you with some sanity saving tips . . .

Right, first things first. Remember that when you first appear on a landscape you are at the very lowest point, which means that it can be a little difficult to get a good view of anything, and this is where many first-time players can become discouraged. Perseverence is the key at the start of the game, and if you keep turning at different heights every time, you'll soon find a way out. To make things easier, press the HELP key before you start looking, as then at least you have some idea of where you're trying to go.

Once you're out and begin to see different routes upwards, you should note that making huge jumps onto much higher squares is not the way to go about things. It's always best to move around on the level you're on before you go upwards. This is partly because the best ways upwards are sometimes concealed, but mainly because getting to a high point that is near your starting position will nearly always put you right in the Sentinel's line of vision. So try and get as close as you can to him first.

TREES

Novice players will often absorb as many trees as they can as they go along, but this can be hazardous to your long-term survival. Trees can provide a valuable decoy while you're moving, as the Sentinel will check ALL the squares with an energy value of more than one, so even if he is facing you you may have time to escape as he checks all the trees first. By absorbing all the trees you are only exposing yourself to him (Ooo-er!).

HALF-SCANS

If you get caught in a half-scan, DON'T PANIC! The Sentinel can't see your base square, so you're safe for the moment, but as soon as you detect a half-scan you should immediately absorb all the trees in your area as the Sentinel uses them to turn into Meanies.

Should a Meanie appear before you get a chance to react, you have a few seconds to absorb it before it turns to face you. Whatever happens, don't move upwards, as this will put you right into the Sentinel's gaze, so try and move sideways or backwards behind a wall and then go upwards to absorb the Meanie.

HYPERSPACING

Try not to use it, as it's very impractical. Not only does it lose you three energy units and totally throw all your carefully planned tactics out of the window by repositioning you randomly on the landscape, but it almost always sends you to a lower position than you were before, which is the last thing you want. You should never hyperspace while being scanned, as you'll have no chance of getting your old shell back.

CHEATS

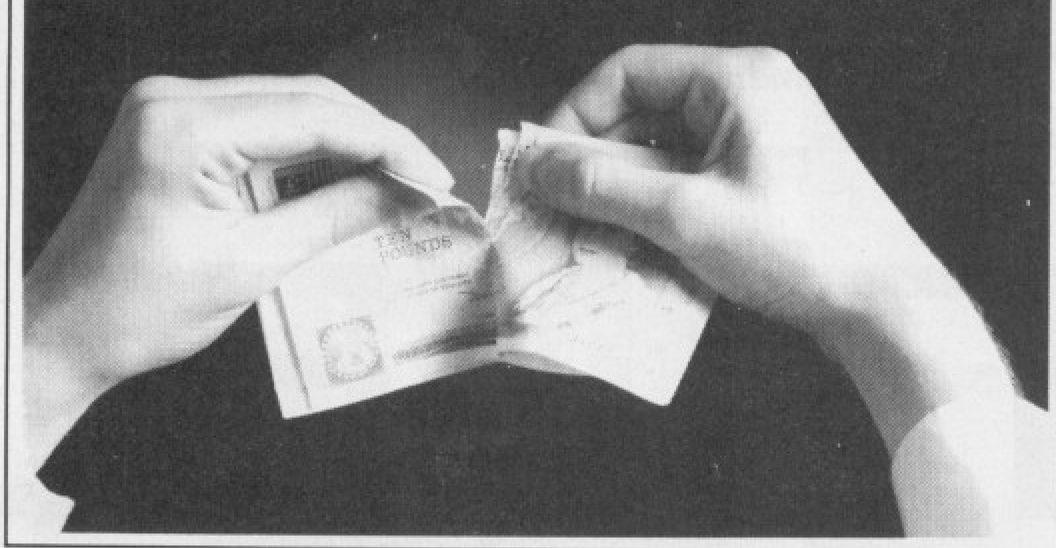
As landscape zero is an absolute doddle, you can use it to gain codes to some of the other earlier landscapes. To do this, enter landscape zero, defeat the Sentinel (easy peasy) and then count how many energy units you have left. Take away three from this to account for the final hyperspace, and the number you have left should be the amount of landscapes you will jump. In this way, it's possible to visit any landscape you want under the one within reach by expending units creating trees and boulders until you have the desired amount. In fact this works on any level, but I've used number zero because it's the easiest for beginners to try out.

As *The Sentinel* is still fairly new on the Amiga, many new players will want to try out as many landscapes as possible, so I've included a few of the earlier ones. Unfortunately codes from the 64 version won't work so don't get any ideas!

LANDSCAPE NUMBER	ENTRY CODE
0007	84257688
0008	16257084
0015	64046644
0016	66974534
0020	13509661
0043	84199553
0044	96088666
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Wizball

Lawdy, that Amiga *Wizball* surely lost us more man hours than any other game received in CU Towers over the last six months. "Kelly", the seething Ed eventually growled, "seeing as you have such an unnatural preference for playing that damned piece of software over doing any real work, perhaps you'd like to knock up a few tips for our ever lovin' readership. That is", he added, rather sarkily, I thought, "unless you've got anything more pressing to do". Well, how could I resist an invitation like that . . .

OBJECTIVES

Just like the 64 version, you've got to colour in all eight levels by collecting sufficient quantities of the three coloured droplets — these are to be found bouncing around the playing area from time to time — while racking up the highest possible score along the way by blasting nasties and, of course, avoiding getting destroyed yourself.

GAINING CONTROL

The first step is to acquire sufficient control over Wiz to enable him to survive and thrive. There are ten different enhancements in all, which vary in importance. Until you have acquired a high level of control, be very ginger in moving Wiz about — you've no control over his movement when he's in mid-air and it's really easy to bounce into baddies by accident. As soon as you've shot your first baddie and moved over the pearl left behind, waggle and, presto, you've got mid-air (thrust) control. Pick up one more pearl and you gain complete anti-gravity control over Wiz's movement.

THE CATALITE

Once you can move Wiz about in comfort, go for The Cat (three pearls). Without a Cat you can't pick up any colour. The Cat is also really useful in fending off baddies. The key to using the Cat effectively is to hold down the fire button. This has the effect of freezing Wiz — though not his weapon, which continues to pump out shots — and allowing the Calt to be controlled by the joystick. After a little practice you'll be able to position Wiz so he can safely hit all the colours while the Cat darts about underneath the row of blobs catching all the drops. Try to avoid the alternative tactic of simply driving the Cat through the colour blobs before they've been shot as this wastes away his nine lives pretty quickly. On the other hand, when you get attacked by waves of mobile baddies, especially the police raiders and the bouncing globes, you shouldn't be afraid to use the Cat to destroy 'em before they get close to Wiz. After all, you can always replace your Cat...

THE LEVELS

There are eight in all, best visualised as a "stack" (with level 1 on the bottom). Access routes between them are shown on the maps here. It doesn't really matter what order you complete the levels in, but you won't be able to get onto level 4 until you've done level 2, and so on. Level 5, incidentally, is split into two mutually-accessible halves, and level 8 is absolutely crammed with baddies.

THE COLOURS

There are two approaches to take to filling up the pots and completing the various levels, one scientific and one not quite so scientific. The latter, favoured by most of the CU crew, involves getting as much of all three colours as you can. But if you really want to get precise about your colour mixing, here are the combinations of the three basic droplet colours needed to achieve the various different target colours shown for each level in the target colour pot on the bottom right of the screen:-

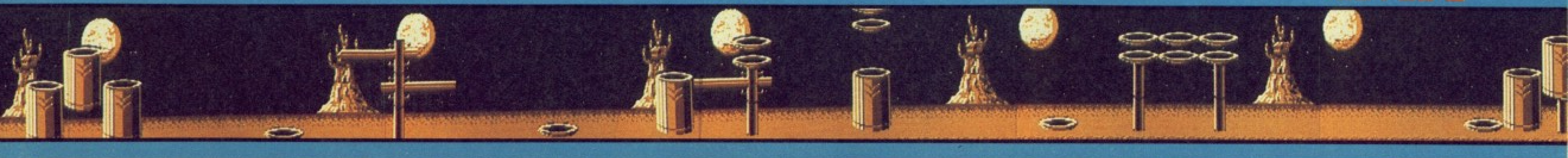
	RED	GREEN	BLUE
RED	100%	—	—
GREEN	—	100%	—
CYAN	—	50%	50%
MAGENTA	50%	—	50%
YELLOW	50%	50%	—
ORANGE	75%	25%	—
BROWN	25%	50%	25%
LT BLUE	25%	25%	50%
PINK	50%	25%	25%

play TO WIN

LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2



FIREPOWER AND PROTECTION

Next most important enhancement after the Cat is the slap weapon (two pearls). This acts as a force field protecting you from projectiles from above or below while the fire button is pressed down. If you want to collect colour safely and easily, bring Wiz down to the bottom of the screen, press fire and use the Cat to pick up all the droplets caused by the colour globules brushing off the slap weapon. However, be careful that you don't take your finger off the fire button or let a droplet/baddie hit you from the side where you're vulnerable.

After the slap weapon has been obtained, you should probably go for a spray weapon. Wiz-spray costs five pearls, Cat-spray also costs five, but can only be obtained once you've already got a Wiz-spray. You can't have both Cat-spray and Wiz-spray simultaneously. Which one you choose is purely a matter of personal preference. The great advantage of the sprays, apart from general increased destructiveness, is that you tend to hit droplets far sooner, thereby giving you more time to spot the special droplets (see below) and go for or avoid them as appropriate. Chances are if you're relying solely on the slap-weapon a blindness or mad-Cat droplet will be gobbled up by the Cat before you even realise what it is.

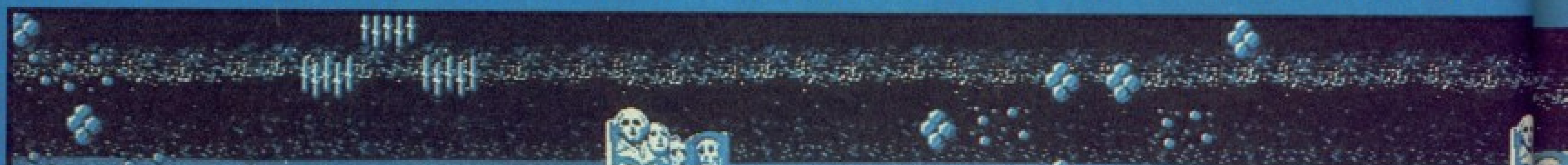
Of the remaining enhancements, the shield (seven pearls) is extremely useful in helping you do well in the bonus levels and when you're under real pressure, but only lasts a short period of time. The rapid-fire and both-way fire are OK but not essential (particularly once you've already got a spray) and the smart-bomb, as Wizball's creators Sensible freely admit, is "useless" and only included "'cos it looked nice"!

When you're in the Wiz-Lab you should pick your permanent enhancements in the order described above (i.e. thrust, anti-grav, Cat, slap weapon, sprays, etc.)

BONUS LEVELS

The bonus level is the one place where the temporary shield is of utmost importance. Arm the Cat with Cat-spray and try to ensure that you collect sufficient pearls to have the shield icon flashing (seven). Use your Cat to fend off all the attackers until it's

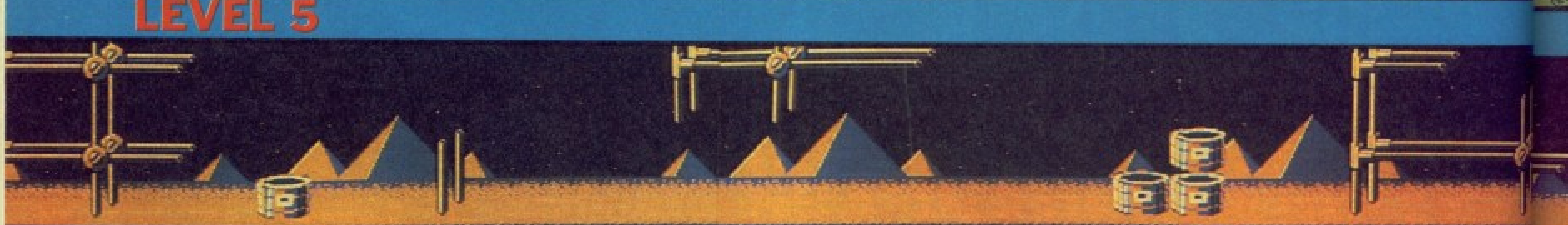
LEVEL 3



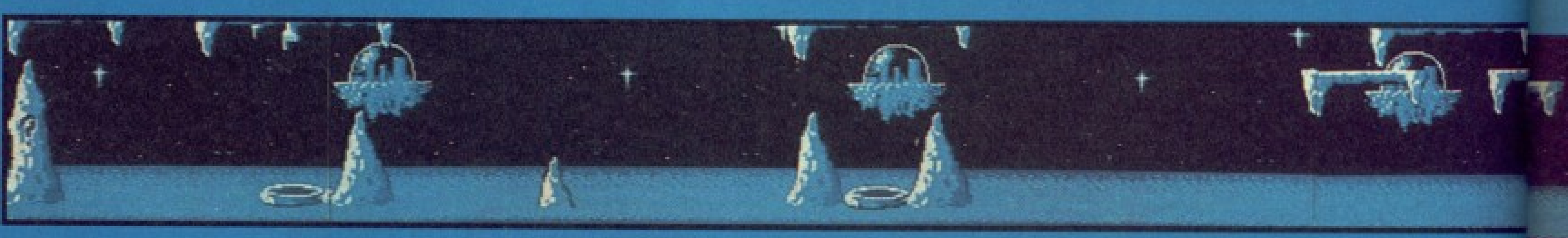
LEVEL 4



LEVEL 5



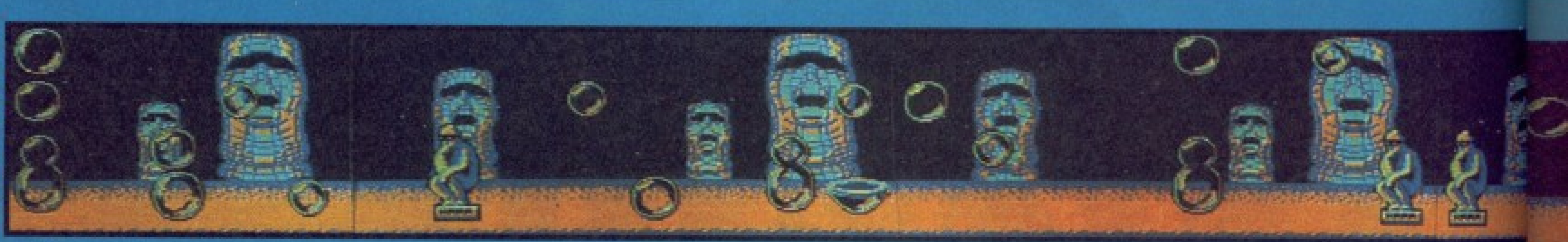
LEVEL 6



LEVEL 7



LEVEL 8



the turn of the indestructible rock wave — then waggle the joystick, get your shield and you'll be able to make it through to the next wave. The most effective way to manoeuvre your Cat to protect Wiz is to keep Wiz in the centre of the screen and spin the Cat around him, firing like crazy.

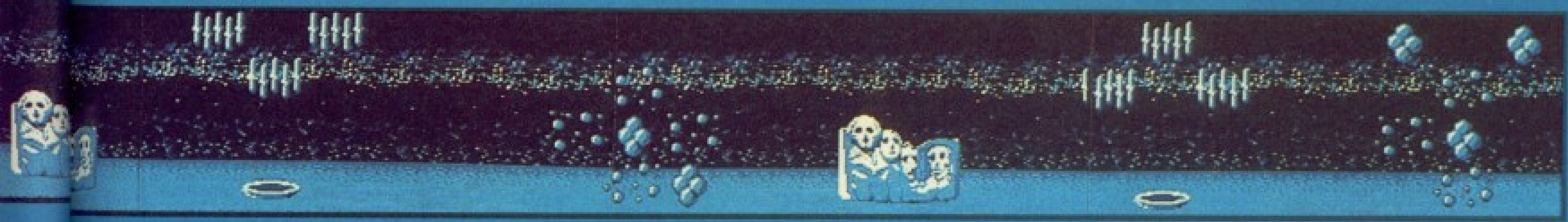
DROPLETS

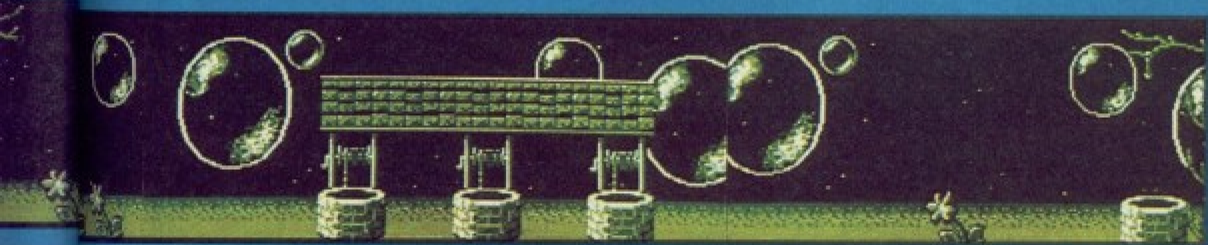
Colour globules come bouncing along at various points in the game. They travel in groups of eight and will be one of three shades (red, blue or green). The general idea is to shoot 'em and pick up the droplets so produced with your Cat before the said droplets hit the ground, thus adding to your three pots of colour at the foot of the screen. However some droplets come down in colours other than those of their parent globule, and these ones have special effects.

White droplets should always be picked up — they give you an extra life. Same goes for grey drops, which make your Cat indestructible (well, they give him 120 lives, anyhow, which is a lot more than you'll need). Purple droplets should be avoided — they turn your Cat mad and render him uncontrollable (interestingly, unlike in the 64 version, on the Amiga your Cat does actually recover eventually). Blue droplets are a pain too, as they turn out all the lights so that all you can see are Wiz, Cat and nasties — you have to shoot all the nasties on one of the levels to switch 'em on again. Finally, sky blue droplets bring on a police raid, which is quite amusing sound-wise but very dangerous.

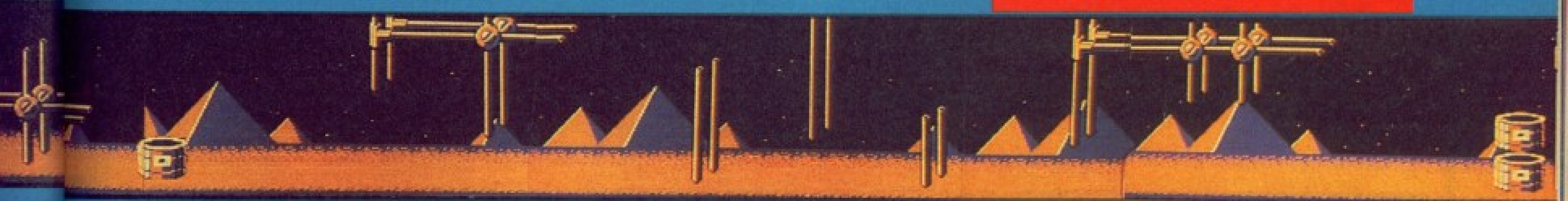
CHEATMODE

Like the 64, there is a cheat mode, and CU is the first to print it again. To access one of the cheat modes, press the space bar to pause the game, type in RAINBOW, press fire to exit pause mode, and the next time you pause the game, press the C key to fill the current cauldron with paint. Programmer Peter Johnson has actually installed two further cheats, but you'll just have to work them out for yourselves, cos the s.d won't tell us...



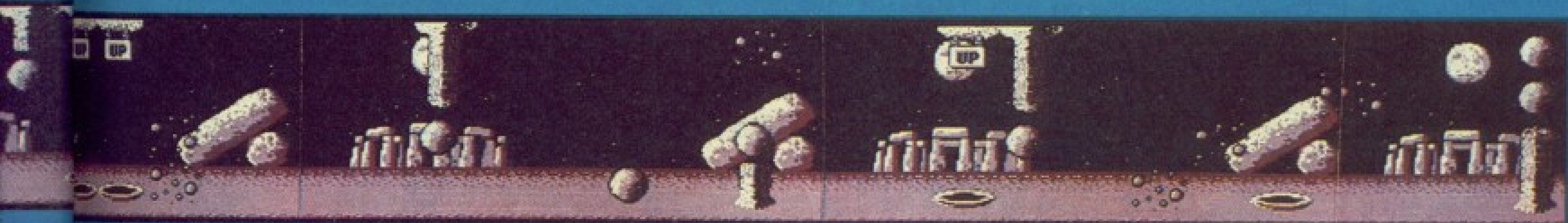


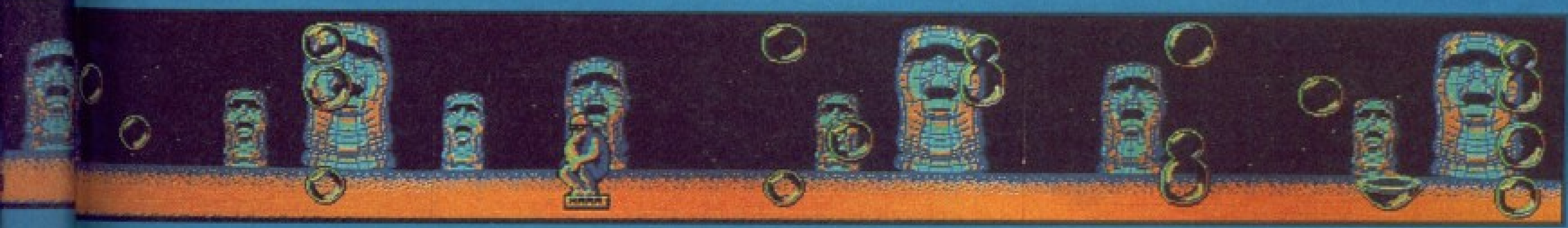
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Wizball





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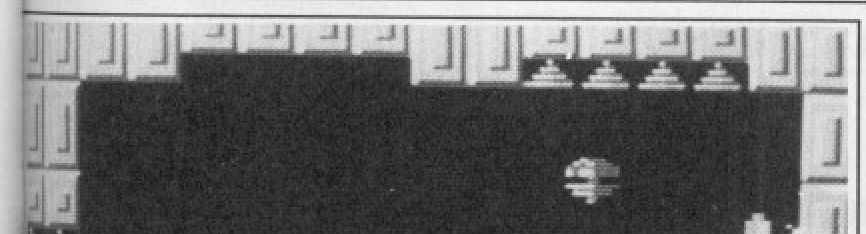
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BLOOD BROTHERS

64/128
Gremlin
Price:
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Hark and Kren are two perfectly normal 18 year old brothers. They spend their spare time building high performance lasers and defence mechanisms in order to pass their Hitech Control and Laser Technology exams. One fateful day, after returning home from trying out their new Skywalk Jet Bikes, Hark and Kren find their family murdered.

Kren recalls the old Indian ritual whereby blood is drawn from two peoples' wrists, then the incisions are pushed together and the people are declared blood brothers.



Hark! crystal ahoy!

Needless to say Hark and Kren make this pact.

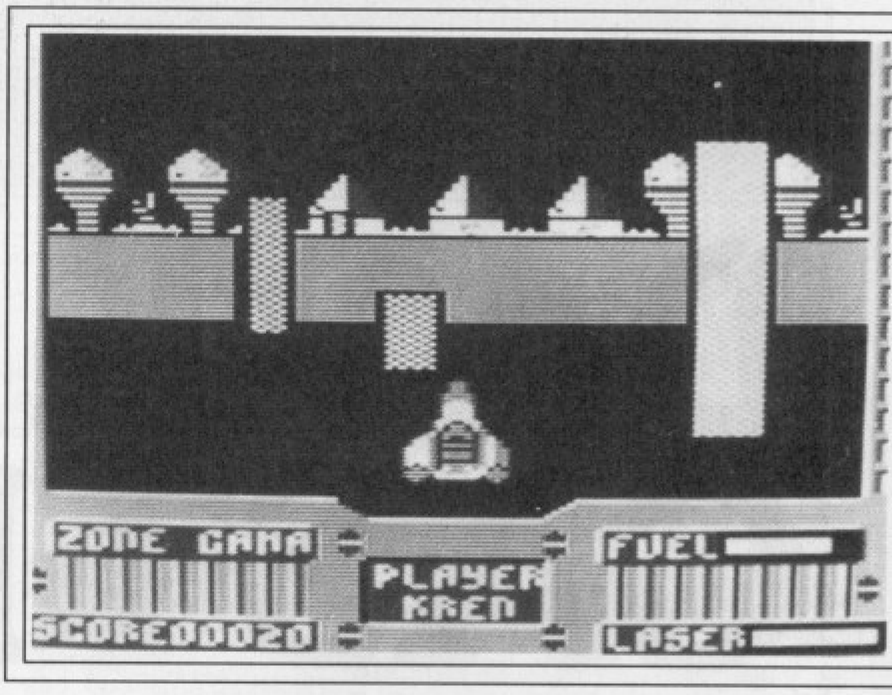
The brothers deduce that their parents were murdered by a band of space pirates called the Scorpions, whose favourite pastime is to raid soft, rich planets. Over the past few years they have stolen vast amounts of gems which have been transported back to their base on the planet Scorpia.

Hark and Kren commenced work on transforming their Jet bikes, equipping them with homemade lasers and defence equipment. Thrust packs were made to help the brothers negotiate the difficult terrain of the mines — the bases of the pirates — and finally, the brothers were ready.

Blood Brothers is a two player game, hindered by the rare fault of no single player option. The best tactic tends to be to fly one of the brothers to another mine area — that way you don't have to worry about toggling between joysticks or fumbling around hectically on the keyboard.

BB has only two sections to it: The mines and the jet bikes. In the mines the best policy is to stay above ground with the jet packs, as acid pools and a rather nasty energy draining system adorn most of the ground. The lasers Hark and Kren are equipped with leave them at a rather large disadvantage owing to their tremendous recoil. This has no difficulty in forcing the person firing off-screen, and when it takes six shots to kill the average nasty, this proves a rather frustrating task.

Lying scattered around are extra energy pods for the jet packs and lasers, and gems which are there to be collected. These play an important part in the game as at the end you're told how many were collected. Bomb-like structures are the key to progress in *BB*: when these are shot they open up dead ends to more fiendish part of the mines.



Jet bikin' — mind the zap.

The Jet bike section is nothing special: guide the bike around obstacles until you reach the entrance to another mine section. Sadly, the shortest section of the game, but easily the most enjoyable which says a lot about the standard of the mines.

The graphics on the whole qualify for average, the backdrops being dull and repetitive, and the main sprites either small and neat or large and chunky, with no real inbetween. The sound is fair; the title screen tune is nice, but it's hardly Jean Michel Jarre.

The gameplay is slow, mainly because of the trouble involved in letting off a decent shot with the laser. I did find myself going back once or twice just to see if it was me not getting anywhere or the game itself. I was right (as usual): my perfect skill could not possibly work with a game where something as natural in the computer world as killing aliens was as frustrating and tiresome as this.

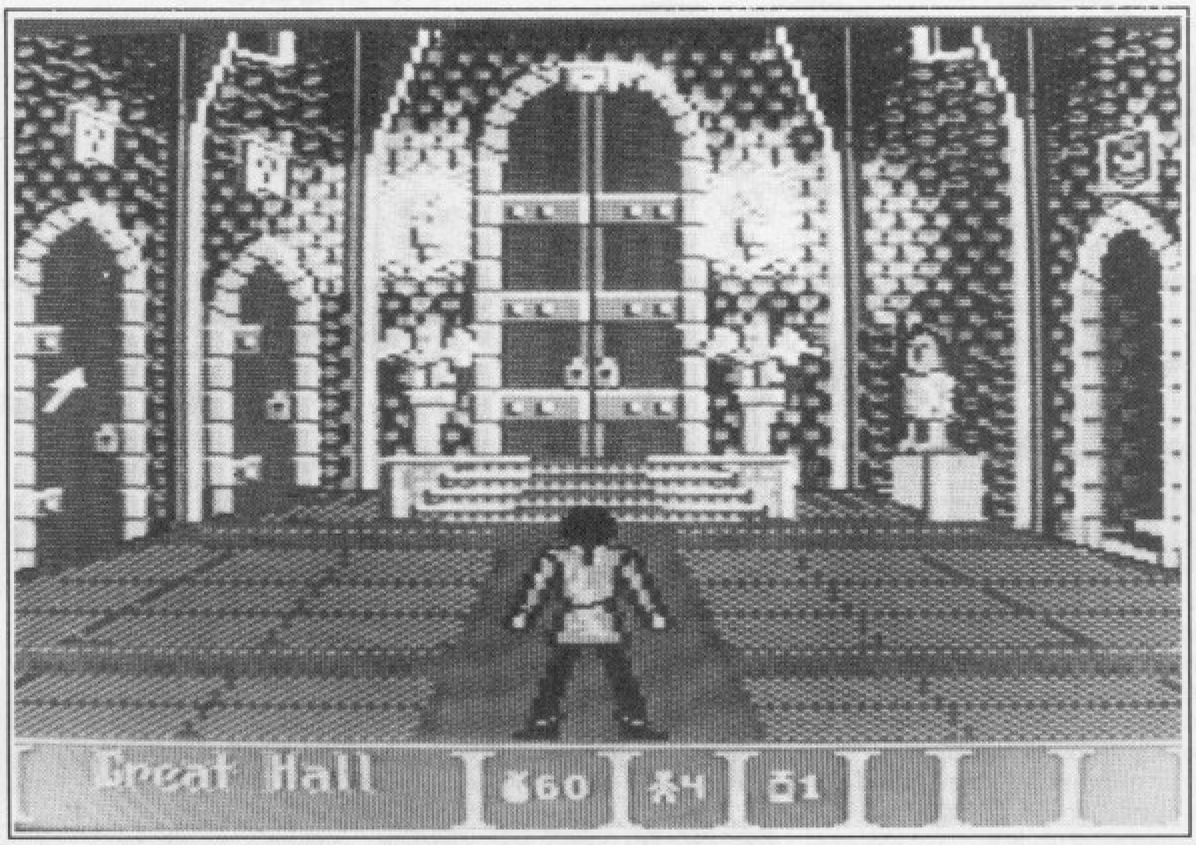
Mark Patterson

BLOOD BROTHERS — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	6
Audio	6
Toughness	7
Endurance	5
VFM	4

CU RATING

5



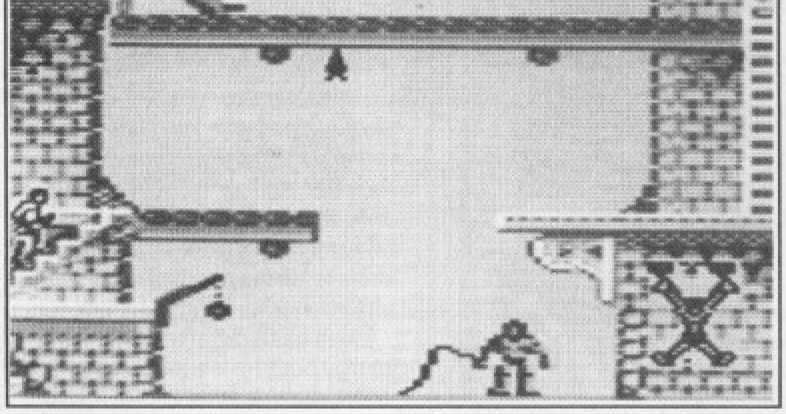
▲ *Eeni, meeni, mieni, mo . . .*

DARK CASTLE

Mirrorsoft
64/128
Price:
£8.99 cass
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If there's one genre of games on the 64 that we *don't* need any more of, it's platform games. Over the years we've had so many inflicted on us, most of them unbelievably dire, that any new release that even *looks* like it *might* be a platform game is immediately met with cynicism. So why, oh why have Mirrorsoft decided to release *Dark Castle,* an unadulterated levels 'n' ladders game? Maybe because the Amiga version (which appeared six months ago) wasn't actually too bad at all, and received good reviews (mainly because at the time there weren't many Amiga platform games about).

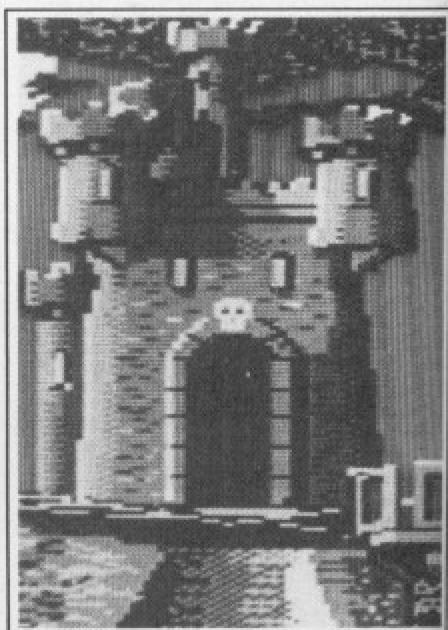
After a lot of guesswork (the inlay doesn't give much away) I worked out that the storyline goes something like this: The Dark Castle is inhabited by an evil Knight who enjoys causing grief and distress to the nearby villagers. To put an end to all this misery, the villagers get together and nominate a mug, to enter the castle and show the Knight where to get off.



▲ *Whip me, beat me, love me* **(er, are you quite sure about this? Ed)**

When the game begins your hero is shown as a large sprite from behind as he stands in the main hall of the castle, confronted by 4 doors, and by pressing the appropriate number key, your hero enters that quarter of the castle. After some more loading, the first platformy castle interior is displayed, not surprisingly roamed by creatures and denizens of every description, including guards and rat-like animals, all of whom are deadly to the touch. So is falling from a great height — but everyone knows that. By going through the standard motions for exploring a room in a platform game (running up and down stairs, climbing ladders and jumping over holes) you must find the two objects that can be used to bump off the Knight — fireballs and a shield, the latter being used to turn you invisible (v. useful for avoiding the castle minions). As soon as you have collected both items, you can progress to the third area, where ol' Knighty himself hangs out.

Dark Castle came as a substantial disappointment to me, in every respect. While the backdrops are halfway decent, the sprites are so minute and poorly defined, that it's almost as if the game is intended to



be a joke. Sound is none too good either, comprising of only a feeble sample version of Bach's Toccata and Fugue (I know my classics!) and weedy sound effects. The gameplay is virtually non-existent, mainly due to the pathetic graphics, with tiresome rock-throwing and nasty-dodging (and rather suspect sprite-collision detection). The final nail in the coffin is the aggravating multi-load that's none too easy to use on the disk version I was playing, so heaven knows what the cassette version will turn out like!

So there we have it. A rather poor and simplistic game with graphics and sound to match. Certainly not worth your hard-earned pennies. Mirrorsoft can do better than this. D Minus, could do *much* better.

Gary Whitta

DARK CASTLE — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING

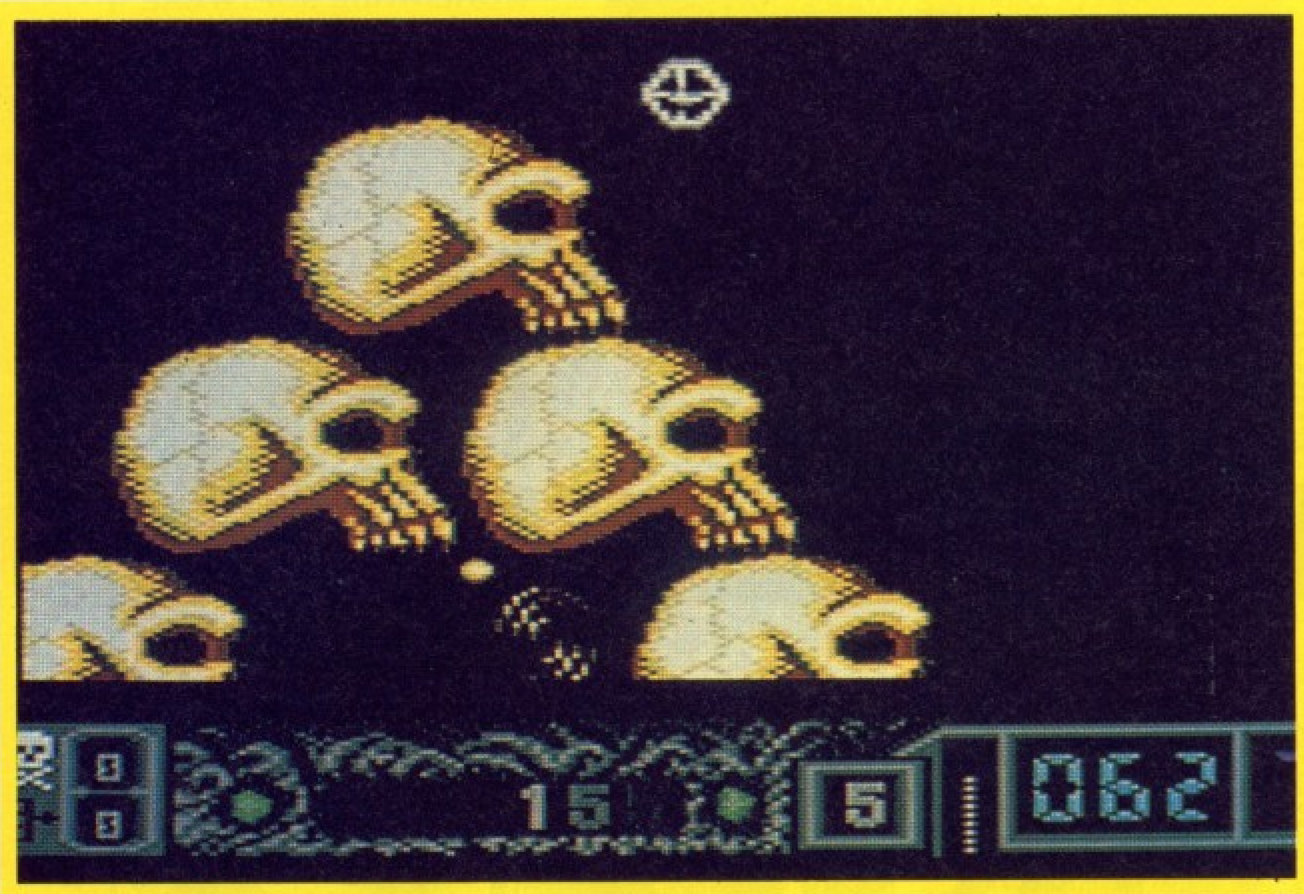
5

I BET HE READS COMMODORE USER

So do 69,004 others ... (Hope there's enough women to go around!)









On the diamond trail — level one.



Forever blowing (acid) bubbles.

NETHER NETHER NETHER

Hewson C64/128 Price: £8.95 cass £12.95 disk

Hewson's latest trans-dimensional adventure sees the player trapped in an alien world full of weird and wonderful creatures. The only way to escape this fantastic prison is to collect enough of the local currency to pay for release.

The alien monetary system is based on diamonds, and it is these which are collected on each landscape in order to gain access to the next.

Each landscape scrolls smoothly in eight directions and has a maze-like series of structures which must be negotiated during the quest for cash.

Dotted around the environment, there are a variety of hazards which are detrimental to the well-being of the player's ship. Static 'Demons' release acid bubbles, goat heads spit out acid blood, alien generators produce small nasties and floating mines wander around the landscape on a mission all of their own. All aliens are deadly to the touch and reduce the ship's shields on contact; 12 hits and the shield fails — any further hits and one of the player's three ships is destroyed.

Shooting aliens occasionally releases a glowing icon, each of which produces a different effect according to its design. These result in extra points, the ability to kill demons on contact, extra lives, invulnerability and one or two disadvantageous effects too.

The landscape also holds hour glasses which are collected to add



Visit the Nether regions.

30 seconds to the timer which signals the loss of a further ship upon reaching zero.

Teleports dotted around allow ease of movement through the current level. However, the exact place of exit must be learned through trial and error.

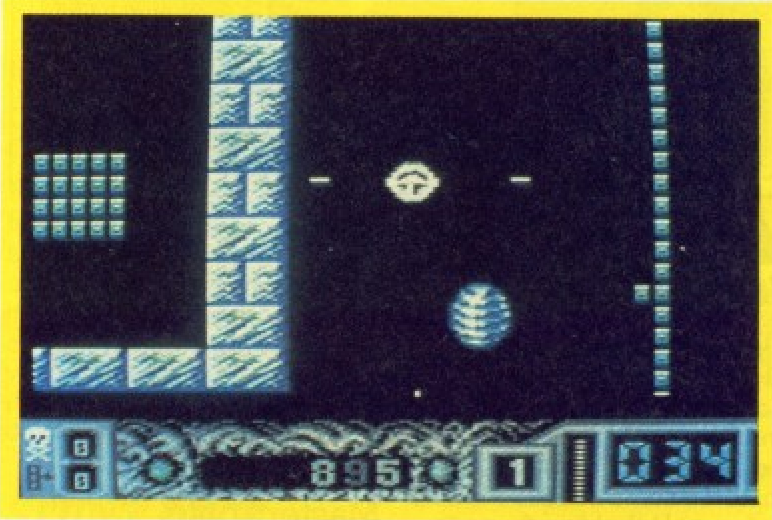
In between each level, an intermission screen is entered which, if solved, awards the player an extra life. This usually takes the form of a puzzle whereby diamonds must be produced by correct manipulation of the available objects.

Netherworld is a very slick product, from the sampled guitar voices on the title music, to the silky-smooth scrolling and the gorgeous graphics. And although not entirely original in its concept (it borrows heavily from *Boulderdash, Zynaps* and *Quedex* to name but a few) the final blend of maze, puzzle and blasting action proves entertaining and quite challenging.

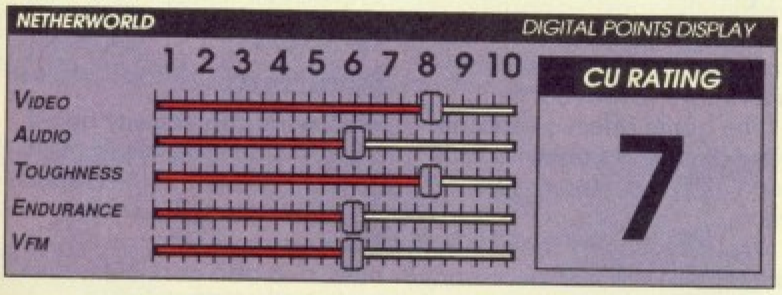
Steve Jarratt



A five-man skulling team.

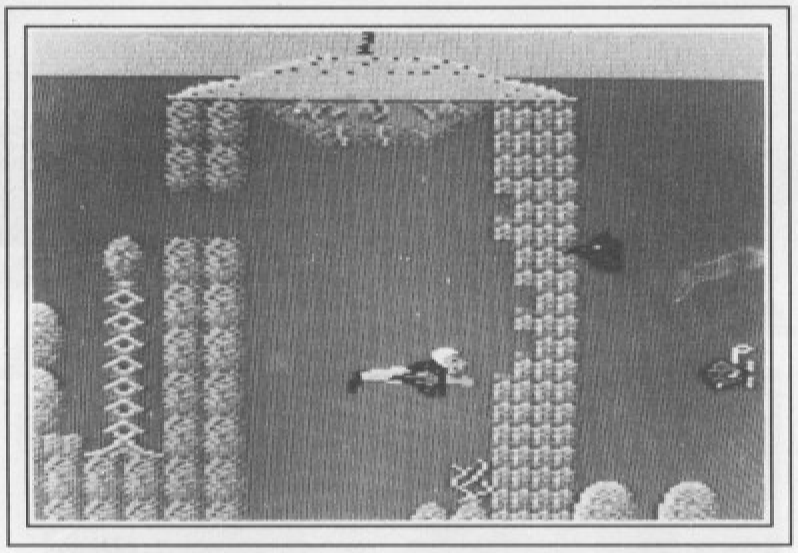


Part of the first intermission screen.



RWORLD

CHEAPO ROUND-UP



Scuba Kidz

SCUBA KIDZ
Firebird

Silverbird's latest is more of a 'Scuba Kid', really, since there's only one of him. Still, on with the plot: an evil Sea Lord has captured some of Scuba kid's mates and is holding them captive within his submarine lair. Scooby sets off in search of his pals, armed only with a pair of trunks. Along the way, though, he collects his scuba gear and additional items such as keys to allow access to later sections of the labyrinthine landscape, and 'bubble power' which endows him with the ability to blow large, destructive bubbles, killing fish and removing sections of coral which bar his path.

The only limitations to Scuba's progress is his oxygen supply which must constantly be topped up by swimming to the surface of the sea, otherwise his tank runs out and (for some unknown reason) he explodes into three pieces.

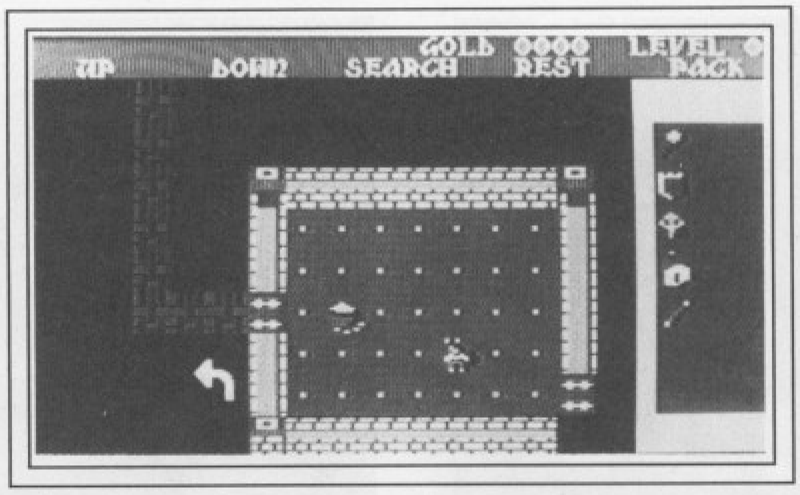
Scuba Kidz is a lot of fun, smart to look at and easy on the ears, having a great title tune and start-game ditty. It's also quite clever technically, and is the best contender for the Cheapo of the Month award. **(9)**

ROGUE
Mastertronic

Taking the form of a *Temple Of Apshai* explore-and-collect 'em up, *Rogue* takes the player on a mission through the Dungeons of Doom to find the Amulet of Yendor, carrying a backpack containing a mace, some armour and some food.

Movement is directed via an arrow which the player's character follows, and the surrounding terrain become visible only as progress is made, in a similar fashion to *Ranarama*.

The player can search the immediate area, rest, and climb up and down the staircases which link the different levels of the dungeons. He can also select items from his backpack and utilise them as he wishes. Unfortunately, the player has to type in the first letter of the desired action, while everything else is controlled



Rogue

from the joystick, which proves a real pain during play.

There is no sound during the game other than a feeble 'ping' whenever any option is selected. However, the graphics are small but clear, and an atmosphere of sorts is generated along the way.

Game play is a little tepid, but *Rogue* should satiate shoestring explorers in need of a fix. **(7)**

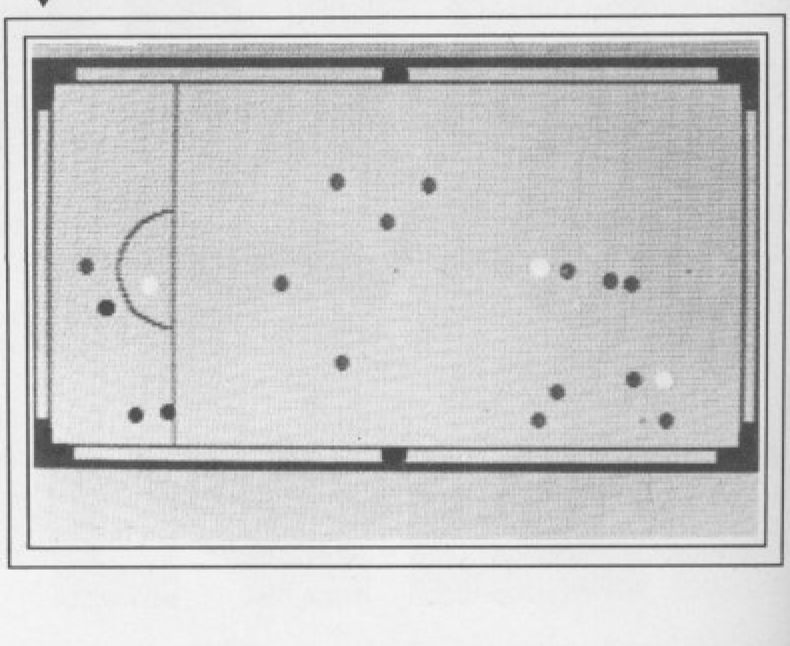
PROFESSIONAL SNOOKER SIMULATOR
Code Masters

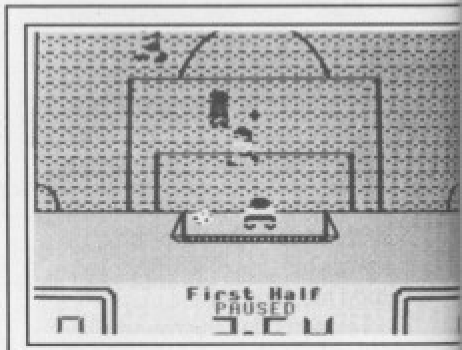
I'm no fan of pixelated versions of the green baize sport, and Code Masters' offering does little to sway my opinions. To be fair, this snooker game does go a long way towards what can be considered a suitable alternative to the real thing.

The game offers a separate view of cue and object ball as seen from the player's eye view.

This allows most shots to be attempted with some accuracy and the resulting movement of the balls is quite realistic, although there are frequently

Professional Snooker Simulator





European Five-a-Side

slight pauses as the computer does its sums.

A serious omission would appear to be a computer opponent. Although not vital, this does limit the appeal of the package as a whole. Recommended to fans only. **(6)**

EUROPEAN FIVE-A-SIDE
Silverbird

Well, what can you say about a five-a-side footballing game? You control the player nearest to the ball on your team, you can kick and lob balls, and also get your goalie to dive when the opposition have bettered your defence. Possession is gained

automatically when suitable contact is made with the opposing player who currently has the ball, and a sampled cheer is heard whenever one side scores.

The action is viewed from overhead and the pitch scrolls vertically up and down as the ball is passed around. Normal rules apply and the program allows you to alter the length of each half and, should you need to, the colour of the pitch!

This is far from the best footballing game ever, but it's certainly one of the cheapest. If you're a fan of the sport and fancy a quick game against a friend or the computer, you could do far worse than this offering from Silverbird. **(6)**

TROJAN WARRIOR

Silverbird

Apparently, some helmeted hero on board a winged horse has come from afar to rescue the princess. Unless I'm mistaken, old Trojan Warrior has been playing too many arcade games — especially *Nemesis* and the like — for the ancient one's mission takes place against horizontally-scrolling backdrops and he shoots what can only be described as laser bolts. He can also collect extra weapons (such as glowing stars which look and act suspiciously like multiples) and is forced to run the gauntlet of swarms of alien species.

At the end of each level, there is a transporter which places our hero in a 'time tunnel': a rapidly moving corridor which must be negotiated without touching the walls. This recalls a budget game called *Cyber One* from Sparklers and in which you were warned to 'Beware the Mega Speed'?!

There are five levels of this hokum and, to be honest, it's not at all bad. Unoriginal, plain and occasionally annoying, but entertaining nonetheless. **(6)**



▲ *Trojan Warrior*

SLIMEY'S MINE

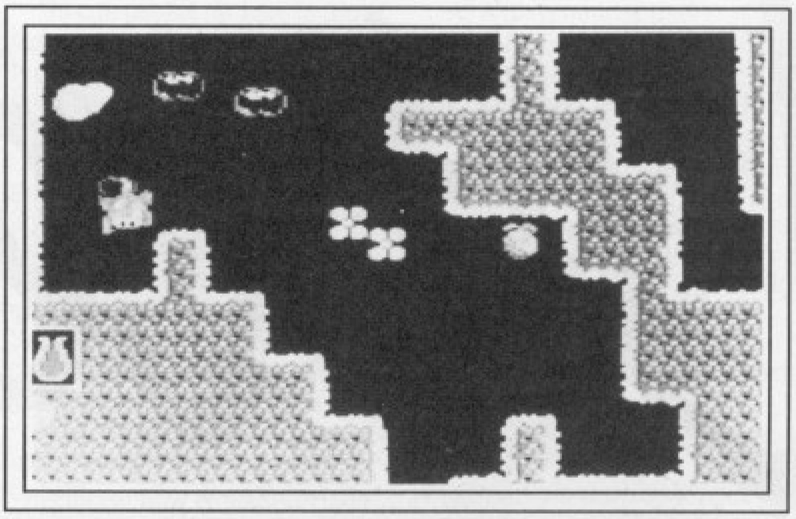
Silverbird

Poor old Slimey has been shipwrecked in an asteroid field, and the only way for him to return home is to explore the deserted mineworkings which riddle the asteroids, and salvage the scrap parts necessary to repair his ailing craft.

The mines are over-run by aliens who are blasted to leave a blue diamond behind. On collecting enough blue diamonds, a red one appears and this is picked up to allow progress onto the next screen. Slimey can transport himself around the same screen, let off a smart-bomb-like 'banana bomb' and also visit neighbouring asteroids.

This unastounding game is saved by the huge amount of sampled speech and effects which have been crammed into the program. Aliens die with a variety of cries, groans and moans, and Slimey himself has a large repertoire of noises, including a snoozing sound when the pause mode is activated!

The gameplay is a little frenetic, but, sampled sounds notwithstanding, the lack of variety and repetitive play severely diminish its lasting interest. **(5)**



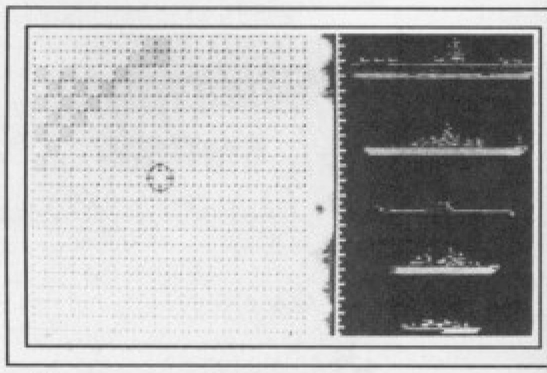
▲ *Slimey's Mine*

BATTLESHIPS

Encore

I didn't think much of Elite's version of the classic paper 'n' pencil game when it was still destined for the full-price big-time, and its appearance on Elite's budget label has done nothing to sway my opinion. It's neatly presented, easy to use and nice to look at. However, the simple gameplay remains the same. In fact, the only additions Elite have made are those of 'salvo fire' and, of course, the singing player option.

You can always play *Battleships* with a friend for free, and I don't think you'll be too impressed with the computer's lack of strategy and interaction. Without someone else to whinge and moan when you've 'sunk their submarine', *Battleships* can become very dull indeed. **(4)**



▲ *Battleships*

STUNT BIKE SIMULATOR

Silverbird

Stunt Bike Simulator follows the perilous actions of a stuntman as he drops from a hand glider onto his trusty bike, bunny-hops over a series of logs, jumps through flaming hoops to land safely back in the seat, drives into the back of a speeding lorry (Italian Job-style) and finally clambers aboard a moving helicopter from his two-wheeled steed.

Exciting stuff, eh? Well, no. Not really. All the actions takes place across some astounding indifferent backdrops and the tasks themselves are hardly engrossing, each being quite similar to the next, and not requiring a great deal of ability.

Once completed (which won't take too long) the game should become totally forgettable. In fact, it already has . . . **(3)**

Stunt Bike Simulator ▼



Letters

Shopping sense

I always get your fab mag as soon as it comes out to the shops, and apart from the fab reviews and skill charts and tips section I always look through the ads, as you can always get bargains. I need this because I'm still at school, therefore I get a low income. I've done this for quite a while, BUT have had many a problem. Like it takes about three months for a full price game to arrive at my doorstep. By this time the game would have been reduced in price by other mail order companies, which is most irritating. One such case: I rung the bank and finally got in contact with the company. It turns out that the person who is running it is a bit slow. What a cheek, they're not slow at cashing your cheque as I learnt from the bank, and if this wasn't bad enough my Dad swore never to write a cheque for me again due to the mucking about.

I've put together some guidelines to follow when buying your software. I mean, we haven't got money to throw around.

1. Try to make sure the company you are purchasing from has been in previous issues, so it's not just a one-off company.
2. Try to make sure the company you are ordering from has a telephone number. Ring them up to make sure they're actually who they say they are and see if your game is in stock as this is sometimes the problem.
3. Not so important, but see if your order has actually reached the company as the Post Office can be at fault.
4. See if any of your friends have used the service, so it's not just a one-off company.

That's all. So far I haven't had many problems with the ads in your mag. Most of the companies are quite prompt. It's just the few lazy ones that need to be poked.
Nicholas Blackman,
London SE18

Makes sound sense to us, Nick.

Stud stick

The Stud is here fighting for the free people of the world! (Or the CU readers, anyway!)

Anyway, mates, I was filling out my entry for the super cool joystick compo when I noticed (thanks to my eagle-sharp eyes!) that you said, and I quote: "For the first time in CU's history, here are some joystick reviews." Well let's hop aboard my stud-mobile (gold, time-travelling Rolls Royce) an' check that out. Back we go, past Sept '87 and *Cali' Games* — whoops, there goes Feb '87 and *Space Harrier*. Another year to go yet. On your left you'll see July '86 go by as does *Green Beret*. Slowing down now as Feb '86 crawls by with *Commando* at the top of the chart. Ah, here we are. December 1985. The cover says: "Win Geoff Capes, Joystick Roundup, Bigger reviews." Let's have a look. I'll just take my shades off and what do I see? My God! Cop this: "The G-Force demand the best joysticks when they're reviewing. So they got Valerie Buckle to road test a whole load of models." Yup! How could you have written that! Mind you that was over two years ago! OK, back into the Rolls and back to May '88. Right, I've proved my point, so send up to my penthouse (full of the most sexiest and fun-loving girls time could offer) my CU tee-shirt. If Edmund Blackadder runs CU, who're Baldrick and Percy?
Will 'The Stud' Turner,
Dagenham,
Essex

(Blush). You've got us there, Stud. In answer to your question: Nick and Gary seem to fit the bill.

Con-fuse-d?

In June CU there was an interesting story about a 64 blowing up. My letter may be interesting to others like me whose technical ability extends only to the correct selection of joystick port (in a minimum of two tries of course).

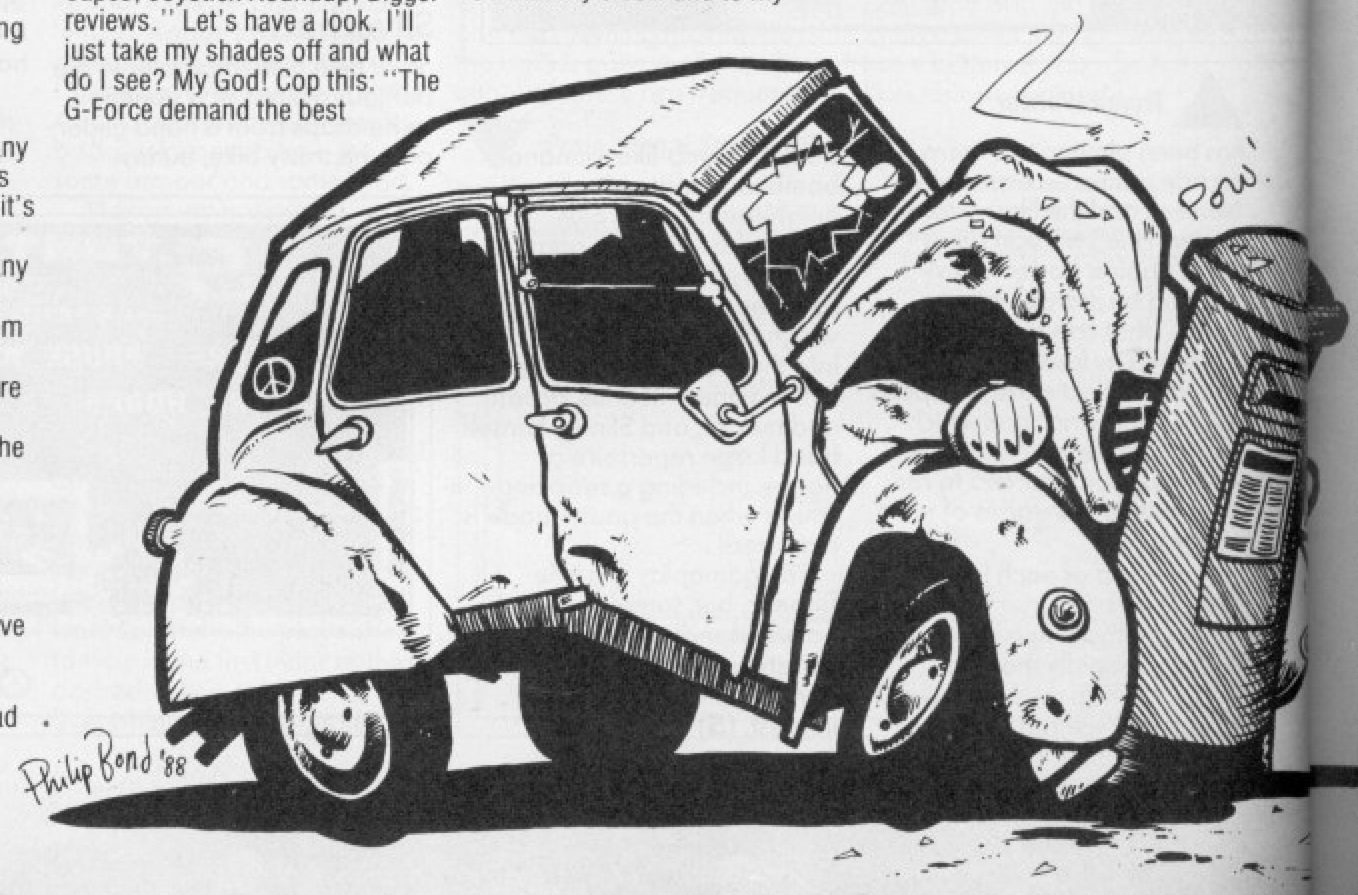
During a hectic moment of zapping I inadvertently zapped my 64 with my elbow and to my dismay the 64 blew up. I removed the screw holding the case together (I know there should be three but two had dissappeared). On opening up the keyboard, lo and behold a fuse had blown. Being a keen adventurer I journied to a local electronic shop and obtained a replacement. I inserted the new fuse and the old screw, result — an unblown 64 zapping merrily away for three years since.
Ron Guest,
Sheffield 5

We're glad you saw the funny side.

Coin-op queries

I have been reading your magazine for three years now. In the Buzz section of your January issue there was an article mentioning something about coin-ops up for grabs. What I'd like to know is who's going to convert *Wec Le Mans*, & *Taito Airlines*? And when are they going to appear? Especially *Wec Le Mans*, which got a good review in the arcades section of the March 1987 issue of CU.
Riaz Chunara
London N16
PS Are there going to be anymore CU Cool Spool tapes as the last one was brilliant.

No plans as far as we know to release either game exist, however many of Konami's titles will be appearing via Ocean/ Imagine, so who knows . . .
Another Cool Spool isn't out of the question, so stay tuned . . .



Hack 'n' slag

● My patience has been tried enough! I have bought your magazine in the forlorn hope that things would improve. Let me explain. I bought my 64 abroad before software was available in the UK. With over 4,000 pieces of software spanning some 700 disks I believe I can talk with some authority on the 64.

My understanding of the word 'user' is obviously not the same as the people who produce the magazine. There are those out in the big wide world who prefer to use their computer for more than just playing games. None of the magazines that I have looked at seem interested in providing useful information to the poor 'user' who needs help. Games and video coin-ops seem to be all that magazines are interested in. Is this what the great 64 has been reduced to? Shame on you all!

I get a magazine from abroad which costs me £2.50 a month, but in addition to games reviews it covers such things as courses for beginners, machine code, graphics, music, data storage, disk ROM, tips and tricks for both beginners and professionals, program listings etc. I am sure that people would pay a little more for a magazine that covered the needs of all types of 64 users.

Enough about that! I would like to comment on your article with regard to 'Piracy'. There are in fact two types of piracy — professional and amateur. The professional is a deadly virus which I agree should be stamped out. They copy software by the truckload. I can remember in Germany when the police impounded a container load of pirated software and subsequently broke a ring stretching over six countries.

I believe MP missed a vital point! Why did it all start? The software houses are not free from blame in this respect. I bought my disk drive as soon as they were available in Europe and wanted to upgrade my software from cassette to disk. Initially this was simple but when software houses introduced 'protection' I was forced to learn how to overcome that protection in order to transfer to disk. At my age (over 40) it was not easy to learn machine code but I did it and took pride in my achievement. In those days it was a challenge to see if you could beat your friends in breaking the game. It was also a challenge to get more out of the machine than the manufacturer said was possible.

Decent software, like Epyx or Infocom, is expensive and the young people, even today, cannot afford to pay such high prices all the time, so that games are passed between friends. This has happened in the music and video maket for years and they have learnt to live with it. It would also help if software houses looked at the profit margins being made on software. I know from experience that on some software the profit — by the time it reaches the customer — is in excess of 60%.

A final point is the standard of software. I have paid £9 for software which on examination is only a 'clone' and the playability of which is an insult to the intelligence of the general public.

I do not condone 'hacking' but I do understand it and hold the conviction that it will not be stamped out until software houses look in a mirror to see where the fault lies. MP put his finger on the button about in-house hacking. Only programmers and employees can provide 'pre-production' copies of software. For example — a game reviewed by CU in June '88 was available on the underground network over six months ago!

John E (ex-GCS),
Colchester,
Essex

Space prevents Mike from having his say, but thanks for your opinions, John. Anyone feel as strongly?

Constructive

● I would like to congratulate everybody concerned with CU for the steady improvement in quality over the last few months. Admittedly, the magazine is still some way off being perfect, but articles such as the piracy reports and the timely arrival of Penn, Rignall and Jarratt are sure to continue the trend which CU is following.

Us cult people up here in Stoke have been watching the state of the two main magazines and have been interested in the routes that both have been following.

Commodore User, after going through a bad patch about a year ago, is now on the up and up. It remains light-hearted and cheerful and is starting to get more involved in the industry. Sometimes however, you seem to get carried away, but nowadays this is lessening.

Now, I've finished with the praise and on to my hopefully constructive comments. No doubt there will be hundreds of readers who will disagree with my views, but the letters page is here for voicing your personal beliefs so that's what I am doing . . .

i) Keep "Tommy's Tips". Now you've hit the big time it would be irresponsible to lose parts of the mag which are interesting to read — even though it may be a minority which find the section appealing. Any product which becomes totally commercially orientated loses out in the long run — look at the way that the ITV network has lost viewers over the last year.

ii) Have more articles like the piracy investigation. I never knew Mike Pattenden could write so well.

iii) Have a programming section — a sort of Tommy's Tips for software.

iv) Introduce more 'character' into the mag. This is an area which ZZAP! has lost recently. It has become 'faceless' where before you could relate to the writers and their beliefs.

To show you what I mean . . .

Q) Who is Gary Penn?

A) Ex-ZZAP! reviewer, wears black a lot, has a freaky hairstyle, generally anti-social at computer shows (who can blame him?) and has a very sensible outlook on life, with which I fully agree.

Q) Who is Bohdan Buciak?

A) A Commodore User reviewer.

Now this doesn't mean anything about Bohdan, and I'm sure he's a great bloke, but nothing is conveyed about him in the actual mag.

v) Do some interviews . . . There's lots of people in the industry that would be interesting to find out about: Shaun Southern, Andrew Braybrook, Special FX, Ocean and numerous others.

vi) How about starting the 'American Hotline' section that was in Commodore User ages ago — written by Dan Gutman. It would prove to be a quite informative, a sort of pre-preview section, and even if it only took up a page, it still would be appreciated.

vii) Finally, I wish to join David Fellows in the call for 'Hotshots' or another similar gossip section. If enough people ask, do you think there's any chance of getting something done? I'm sure with the number of people that Commodore User now employ, one of them should be able to find time to write it.

Well, there it is. Let me just say that this is the hardest time for CU, from here it could continue upwards to knock ZZAP! off it's perch, or it could plummet down to the depths of garbage and drivel. Let's just hope it's not the latter.

Mitch Goodwin,
Trentham,
Stoke-on-Trent

Thank you, Mitch.

i) Tommy's Tips will remain as long as the response stays healthy.

ii) Mike's gone all red now. But yes, there's more to come.

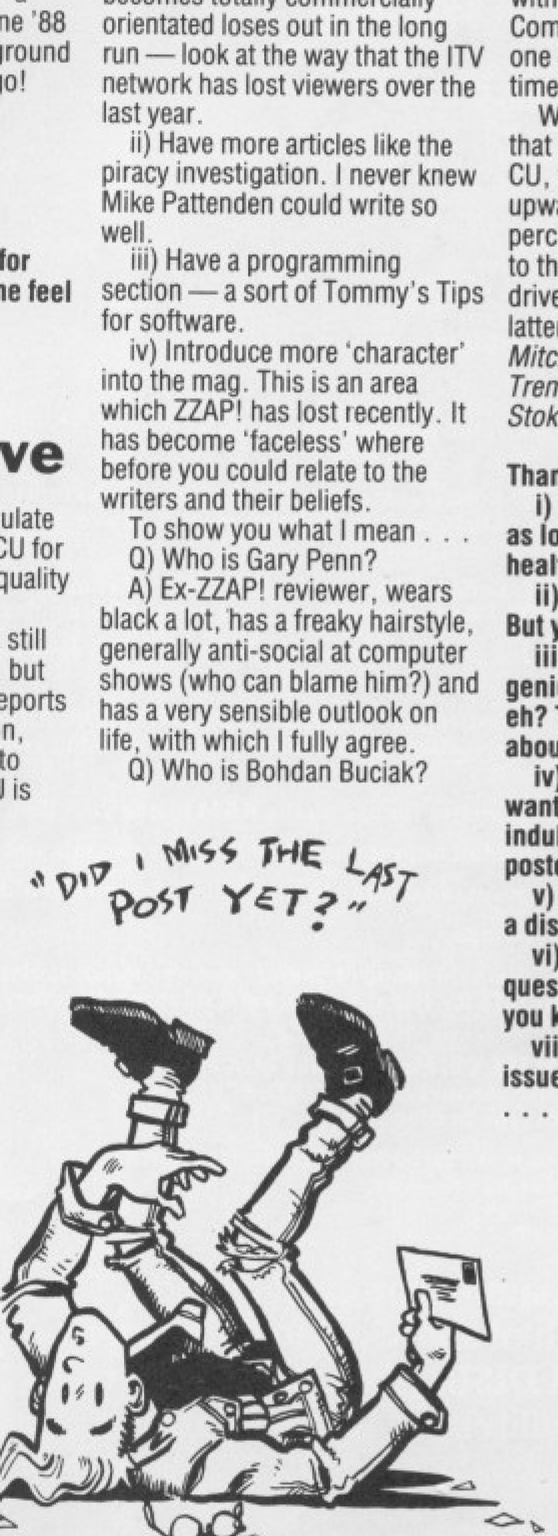
iii) Mmm . . . A God-like genius section for programmers, eh? This we will have to think about.

iv) Heavens, do we really want to become *that* self-indulgent? Answers on a postcard, please . . .

v) Interviews and profiles are a distinct possibility. OK?

vi) This isn't out of the question, either. But we'll let you know in due course.

vii) Hey, check out the last issue. How's that for service . . .



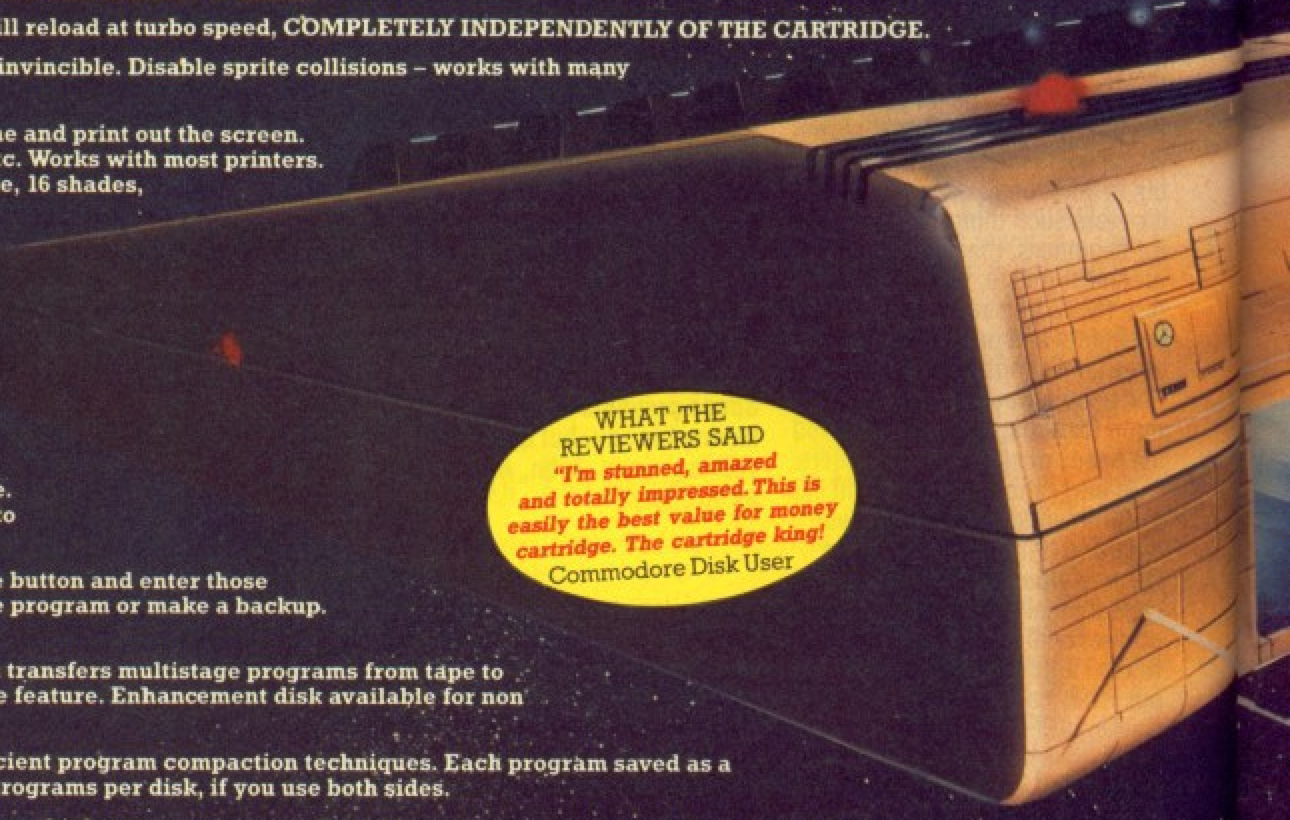
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FOR CBM64/128

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INTO THE VALLEY

by Keith Campbell

MINDFIGHTER

Mediagenic/ Abstract Concepts
Price:
£14.99 Cass
£19.99 Disk
£24.99 Amiga

Robin, an 11-year-old boy with some amazing powers, finds himself standing on a mound looking over a scene of desolation and ruin. He's not exactly there, for he is also back at Southampton University in another time, projecting the scene from the mound through his eyes for his fellow students of paraphsychology to witness together with their Professor.

They soon reach the conclusion that what they are watching is happening in Southampton, a year hence after a nuclear war. Since this is in the future, it is important that Robin discovers the date and the cause of the war so they can prevent it.

The general populace are being brutally enslaved by 'The System', whose guards mete out a cruel justice for petty crimes and casually kill people who are no longer any use to them. To remain safe while he investigates, Robin has to call upon his extraordinary powers of being able to transform his body into the likeness of an animal or bird, as well as telepathic control.

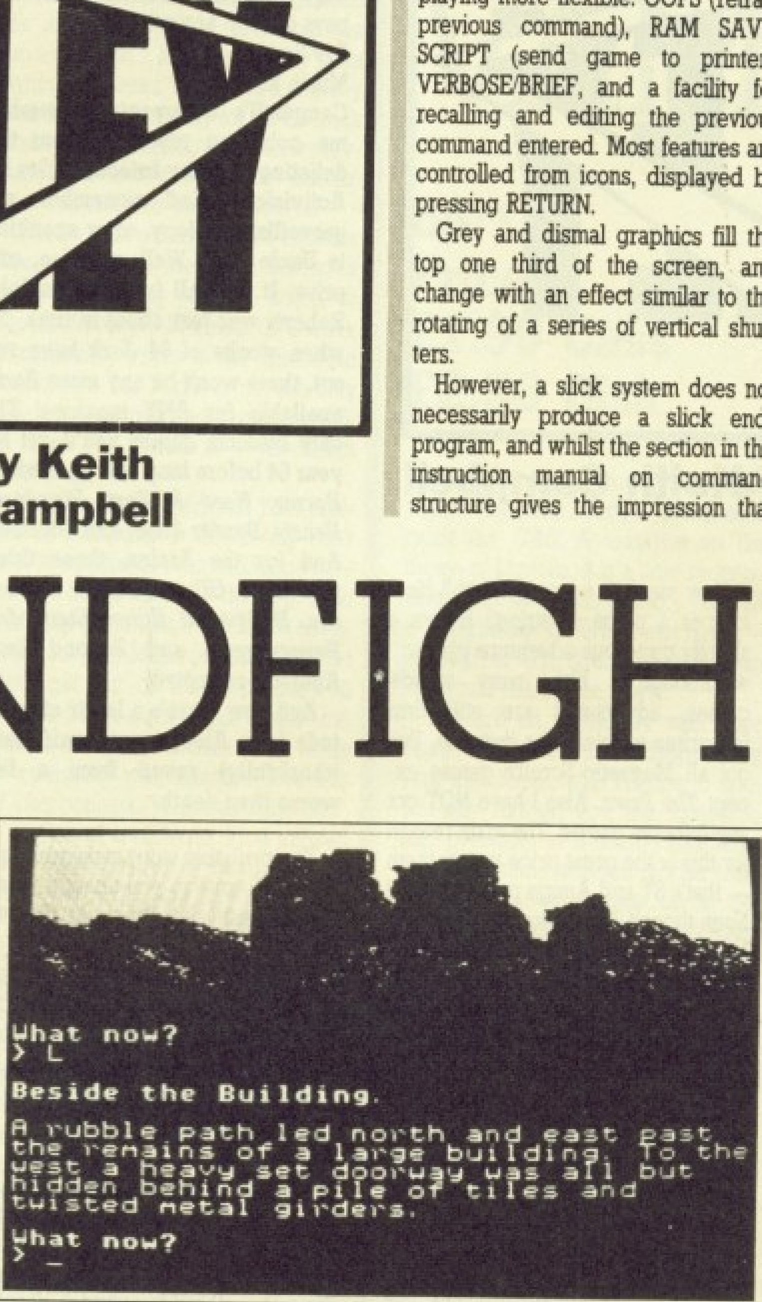
The game has been written using a new adventure system written for Abstract Concepts by Tim Gilberts, of *Quill* fame. It performs well, accepting multiple complex commands, and has most of the latest features that go to make adventure playing more flexible: OOPS (retract previous command), RAM SAVE, SCRIPT (send game to printer), VERBOSE/BRIEF, and a facility for recalling and editing the previous command entered. Most features are controlled from icons, displayed by pressing RETURN.

Grey and dismal graphics fill the top one third of the screen, and change with an effect similar to the rotating of a series of vertical shutters.

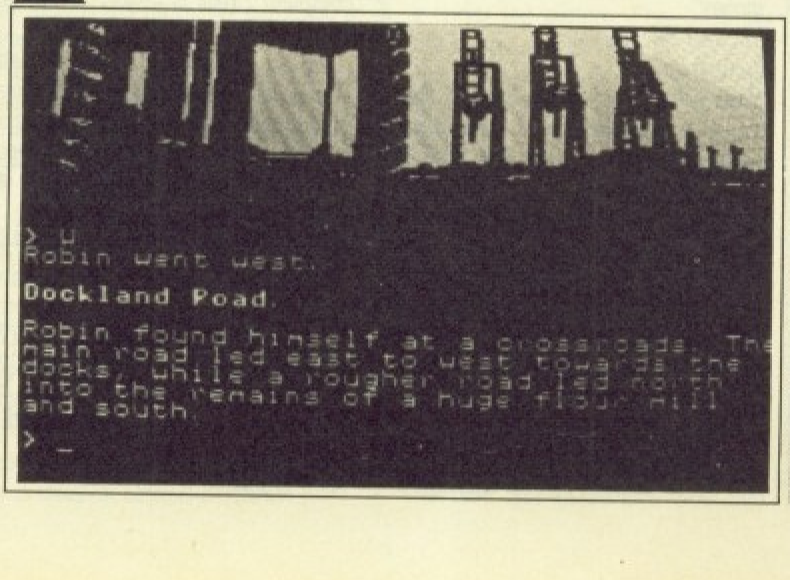
However, a slick system does not necessarily produce a slick end-program, and whilst the section in the instruction manual on command structure gives the impression that this is an Infocom-like parser, the game's performance does not match up to expectations. This is due mainly to some glaring omissions in providing suitable messages in anticipation of likely commands, together with a lack of valid synonyms. For example, EXAMINE all too often brings the response ROBIN COULDN'T EXAMINE THAT, and a newspaper cutting that Robin came across was recognised only by NEWSPAPER and not by CUTTING.

Regular adventure players have learned to put up with that, and indeed *Mindfighter* is better than many — but it is worse than those of a similar price tag.

In the end, it comes down to the story and the puzzles that determine whether you like a particular game. *Mindfighter* is based on a full-length novel by Anna Popkess, who was also responsible for the game design. The subject has, of course, been tackled before in Infocom's *Trinity*. Unfortunately, in *Mindfighter* Anna Popkess handles the theme with nowhere near the sensitivity of Brian Moriarty. Indeed, there are some explicit scenes of brutality in the text; in particular, I found the account of the punishment of a thief by the slow amputation of his hand with a blunt knife quite unnecessary, and the subsequent relish of the guard when licking the blood from the knife quite sickening. OK, so perhaps it could happen, one day. But who wants to play it in a GAME?



Robin amongst the wreckage



A future docklands development?

The fantasy aspect of the story, too, lacks credibility: instead of being put over as pure unashamed fantasy, as it was in *Trinity* after the player had entered the mushroom door, *Mindfighter* seeks to lend credibility to the fantastic powers of Robin and his fellow students, attributing them to the result of a day's successful experimentation in the University.

The 150 page book is supplied with the game, which perhaps accounts for the high price of the package. Alas, it is written in a style that for me, at least, made it a boring read, and with a content that turned me off.

GRAPHICS	**4**
PUZZLABILITY	**5**
PLAYABILITY	**7**
OVERALL	**4**

INTO THE VALLEY

by Keith Campbell

CAMPBELL'S COMMENT

How much is a game worth? How long is a piece of string? Here's a slightly traitorous adventure player:

★ Although I like many arcade games, adventures are still firm favourites of mine. For instance, I've got all Magnetic Scroll's games except *The Pawn.* Also I have NOT got any Infocom games. The main reason for this is the great price tag on them — that's ST and Amiga prices, not 64! Even though Magnetic Scrolls games are £20 for the 64, I got them from a mail order company in your magazine, for which I paid £14. Mail order companies don't seem to sell Infocom games cheap, if at all.

Not too long ago, I bought *Rigel's Revenge* which I think is a much above average adventure, and selling for £1.99 on cassette, so the disk version should be about £5. So why can't Infocom and Magnetic Scrolls reduce their prices to about £15, because I'm sure they would sell better, and they could make more money.

Michael Newman,
Bexleyheath.

Campbell Comments: *Rigel's Revenge* is an absolutely outstanding adventure for its price, but there's very few at £1.99 to match it. The prices of Infocom and Magnetic Scrolls games are decided by Mediagenic and Rainbird, respectively. No doubt their marketing has shown that there is more money to be made at the prices they have set. But with sales of Amigas and STs continuing to boom, let's hope the great heavenly life-giver 'market forces' will make a lower price more attractive before long. And Ray Smith has discovered the same. . .

★ John Roberts, who was looking for *Zork 1*, may have paid too much for it, unless he got a special price. I got *Zorks 1, 2,* and *3,* for £1.99, each from Logic Sales who advertise in PCW. Byrite, who advertise in CU, are selling *Zork 2* & *3* for the same price. So people should take the trouble to read the ads, unless they do not care about the cost. I never buy my software direct from the manufacturer, it pays to shop around.

Ray Smith,
Milton Keynes.

Campbell's Comment: Remember me going on recently about the delisting of many Infocom titles by Activision? And remember my grovelling apology, after speaking to Uncle Rod? Well, surprise, surprise. It was all true! Seems John Roberts was just about in time, for when stocks of 64 *Zork* have run out, there won't be any more *Zorks* available for ANY machine! The only Infocom games you'll get for your 64 before long will be *Lurking Horror, Nord & Bert, Plundered Hearts, Border Zone,* and *Sherlock.* And for the Amiga, those titles, plus *Hitch Hiker, Leather Goddesses, Hollywood Hijinx, Stationfall, Bureaucracy,* and *Beyond Zork.* Apology retracted!

And now, here's a letter of gratitude from Alen, a poor waif that I (thankfully) saved from a fate worse than death. . .

★ You probably won't remember me, but I did write to you about a month ago. Honest I did. Well, like the little saviour you are, you wrote back to me and gave me the answer to my problem. And I don't know exactly what I would have done if you hadn't. What a lovely little being you are.

Campbell's Comment: No I'm not — I'm big, I'm big.

★ We are constantly bombarded in the press in general, and also in the computer press, of images of women as nothing more than sexual objects. Pin-ups degrade and devalue women, and the advertising in the computer press is almost as bad as that.

I'm not really blaming you. Sexism is not generally reflected in your contribution to the magazine. Perhaps I should write to the editor instead, and whine at him! At least I'd be off your back, then!

Campbell's Comment: Ah! A shift in the blame, just in time for. . .

★ If you would be as lovely as you were last month and send me the answer to my problems I shall be grateful for . . . ooooh, at least until I get stuck again.

Alen Williams,
Portsmouth

Campbell's Comment: Scanning through the June issue, the only sexist ad I could find was one teensy weensy *Barbarian* picture on the inside back cover.

CLUES

WOLFMAN
Water the weed and smell the bloom, unless you want to meet your doom!
Cut a crust before lighting up.

COLOUR OF MAGIC
To kill the troll, you must do the right things in Part One. Help the cat and the beggar, but not the Cripple Wa.

ROBO CITY
Squeeze the duck to get the cartridge.

JINXTER
Don't bother to extinguish the fire! Use some magic to get the stool. It's your own ugly face that frightens the mouse off!

SEABASE DELTA
104 degrees, and 199 elevation will set the missile heading for a cannon-levering device.

CRYSTALS OF CARUS
To get the crystal ball, attack witch with wand.
The answer to the riddle is SAY DEATH.

VALLEY RESCUE

Pablo Mendigochea of Nairobi wants to talk to the editor! Does the editor want to talk to him? Perhaps, if you can help Pablo, the editor will have no choice, for it is not that scoundrel Pattenden Pablo is interested in, but Ennio, the editor in *Tass Times*. Ennio has told Pablo to address him properly, but he doesn't know his name. His other problem is that he can't find any other problem! Pablo has been backstage, and also visited Snarl's estate, and ended up wondering just what he should be solving.

"If you have the answers to my humble questions, please, PLEASE, answer quick!" wrote Bjorn Magnusson, from somewhere in Sweden. So I did just that. I wrote some very detailed answers for Bjorn, and then came to write the envelope. But I couldn't — Bjorn had failed to include his address (I even checked the envelope), so I had wasted my time writing the letter. I suppose it was my fault for not checking for an address first — but PLEASE, PLEASE, everybody, DO make sure you include your full address on your letters!

Here's a direct answer to Andrew Reston, who in May was asking if there was a way past the sniper in *Rigel's Revenge*. M Ferris of Gorton, Manchester, writes to say "No!" And meanwhile, Mr Ferris is not the only one who has reached a sticky patch in *Rigel*. The trouble is — he cannot pick it up!

Here are three quickies: Tom Karlsen of Kolbjornsvik in Norway can't take the platinum horn in *Shadowgate* without being killed by the dog. Who can help enrich him? A classic problem from John Miller of Kibarchan. He can't get out of the Repository in *Classic Adventure*. And finally the wizard in *Venom* doesn't seem to be co-operating with Graham Richards of Chippenham. Who can help him?

A plea of a different kind arrived from Mike Laskey of Ramsgate. He was a fan of the new 'never heard of it' TRS-80 and Video Genie, and played a game called *Dracula's Island*. Never heard of it Mike? I'll have you know that up to about a year ago, the entire 'Valley' was written on a TRS-80, using Scripsit! Mike's problem is that he has now re-written the game in BASIC, on an Amiga (without peeking at any code — it's a machine code adventure). He has given it an ending ('cos he didn't complete the original!) and wonders if it would be infringing any copyright if it were published. Problem is, Kansas City, the original publishers, don't seem to be around any more, yet copyright is vested in the author; only the distribution rights are normally vested in the publisher. So if whoever wrote *Dracula's Island* happens to be reading this, drop me a line, so I can put Mike in touch with you!

If YOU have an insoluble problem, or can help someone in distress, write to me at The Valley, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. I'll get back to you as soon as I can! And thanks this month to Ray Smith of Milton Keynes, who wrote in response to a plea from someone who was stuck in *Crystal Of Carus*.

DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES

64/128
Price:
£1.99 Cass
£2.50 Disk



Here is a home-grown adventure written by one Martyn Westwood, using the *GAC*. A variation on the theme of Dracula, it is a little reminiscent of the Rod Pike version, yet with a completely different storyline — although at first, finding myself at an inn, I had feared the worst!

You are on a journey with your Uncle, and having been dropped by your coachman, who refuses to take you any further, you are forced to stay overnight at a nearby inn. Here you hear some strange stories from the locals about goings on at the castle on the hill. And there are some goings on at the inn that very night. Will you be able to save Anna, while the innkeeper is away?

Next day you find yourself outside the castle, in Part Two of this three parter. Each part is loaded as a separate adventure, so there is nothing to prevent you from attempting the later parts without completing a previous one.

The game has a lot of text, all of it very well written, and mostly it is quite atmospheric. What is a little tiring is that there is so little space for it under the picture. This does not scroll up off the screen, so it is necessary to 'page on' using the space bar quite a number of times for the longer descriptive messages.

The graphics are fairly mundane, typical *GAC* graphics in the main, but some of the pictures are quite different (particularly when, during a dream, you are faced with a gypsy fortune teller).

The vocab is not difficult, although one or two obvious words are missing, but to avoid letting the Count win during the first part is difficult, for it is not too clear why you are losing.

A nice little game at a nice little price available from Martyn Westwood, 26 Goathland Place, Woodhouse, Sheffield, S13 7TE.

★ Next adventure for Level 9, due about the time you read this, will be *Lancelot*, an Arthurian tale. The game will be released by Level 9's new Distributors, Mandarin Software. "There's something special about it that will surprise the player," said a Mandarin source, refusing to elaborate and thereby give the game away. Wow! We at CU are all agog.

GRAPHICS	**6**
PUZZLEABILITY	**6**
PLAYABILITY	**6**
OVERALL	**7**

INTO THE VALLEY

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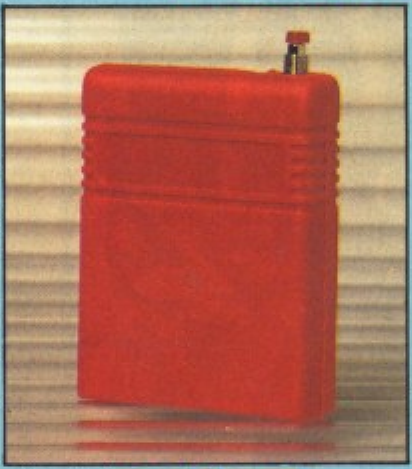
- The most powerful disk nibbler available anywhere, at any price!
- Burst Nibbler is actually a two part system – a software package **and** a parallel cable to connect the 1541/1570/1571 to 64/128 (state type).
- What gives Burst Nibbler its power? Conventional nibblers have to decode the data from the disk before it can transfer it using the serial bus – when non standard data is encountered they are beat. Burst Nibbler transfers data as raw GCR code via the parallel cable without the need to decode it so you get a perfect copy of the original.

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- Copy a whole disk in under 2 minutes.
- Full instructions.
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- No need to buy parallel cable if you have Disk Demon/Dolphin etc.
- Cable has throughbus extension for other add ons.

- Whether to choose FastHack'em or Burst Nibbler? Fast Hack'Em is unbeatable value as an "all-rounder" – with nibblers, 1 or 2 drive copy, format, file copy, 1571 copy etc. etc., so if you have a more general requirement perhaps FastHack'Em is for you. Burst Nibbler is a pure nibbler second to none, for the reasons stated. So if it's just making backups you are interested in, there is no other product to beat it.

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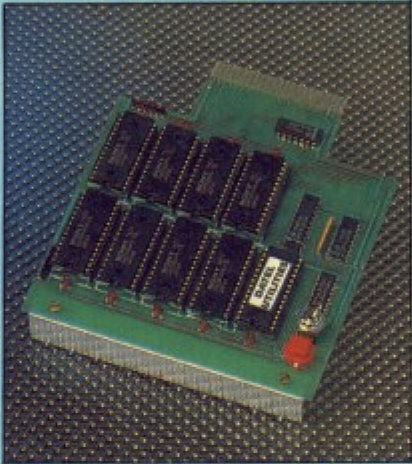
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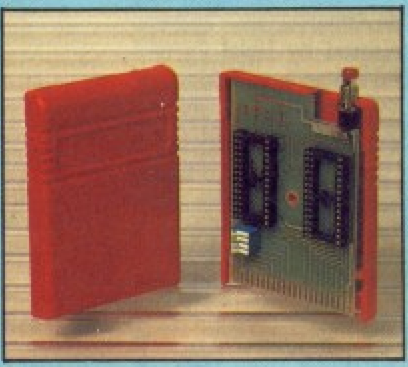
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- Simple to use – just nibble the disk then run the individual parameter for that program and the special routine will produce a perfect working copy – in some cases it will even de-protect it!
- Comes complete with "Super Serial Nibbler" program for users who can't fit a parallel copier such as Burst Nibbler to their drive (Excelerator, Oceanic etc)., not as fast as Burst Nibbler but when used in conjunction with parameters its formidable!
- Remember – this disk is by no means a must for Burst Nibbler owners since it already copes with over 90% of Software. But for those who want everything this is it. Also for none Burst Nibbler owners you get a "Super Serial Nibbler" which together with the parameters is a powerful utility.

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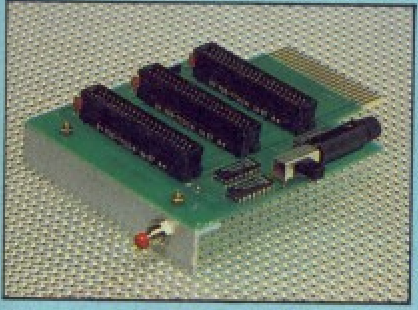
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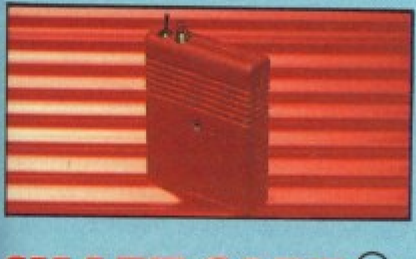
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- FLOAD – special I/O loader.
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- Fitted in minutes – no soldering usually required. (On some 64's the old ROM may have to be desoldered).

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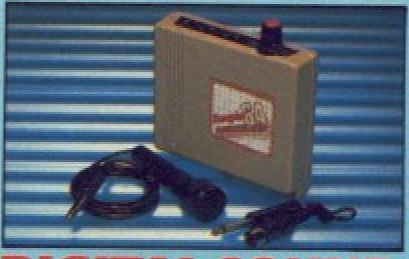
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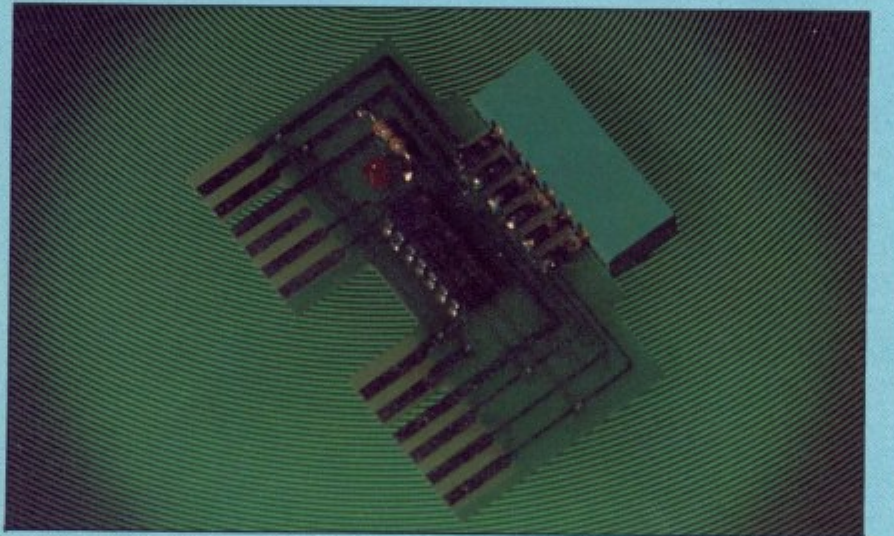
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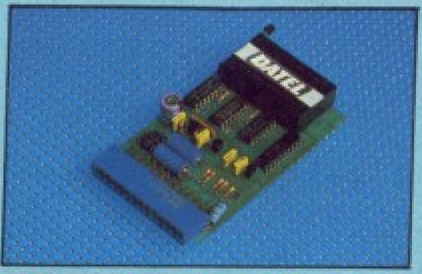
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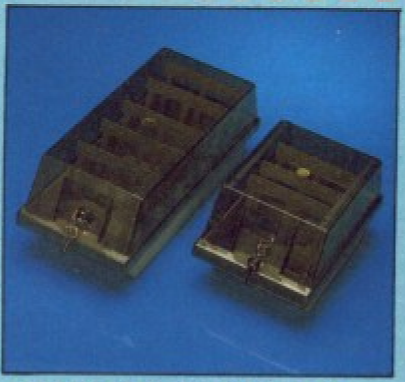
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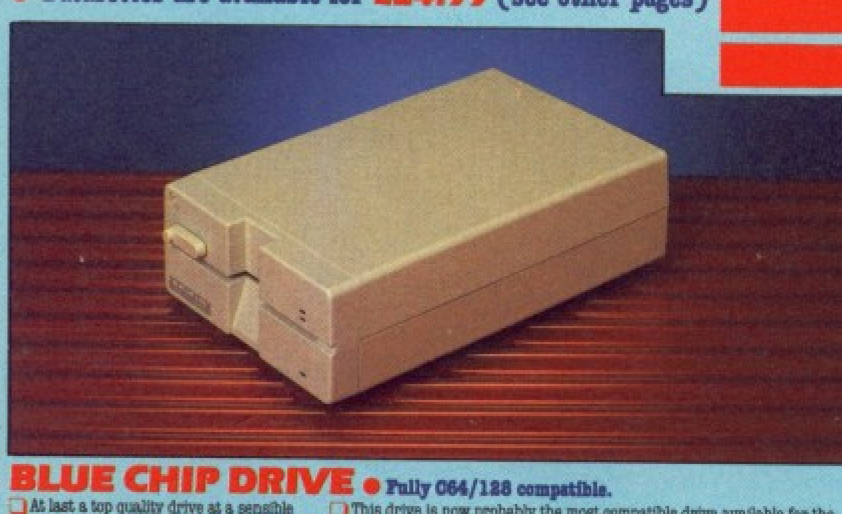


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the god-like genius of GARY PENN

Heavens! One must confess to being well and truly gob-smacked by the uncanny response to the Dog-Like Genius section. It's healthier than something very healthy, and I thank you all from the heart of my bottom (ah, the old ones are the old ones). But I'm afraid it's time to bid you adieu, for I'm orf to t'other end of t'room to a new magazine called The One.. "The One **what,'' you may ask. It's** The One **for all ST and Amiga games-players, and I'll say no more for the mo 'cos Mike's going a bit wobbly... So, it's tarra and hopefully our paths will cross once more on the other side... (Oh, get lost Penn don't pretend you're irreplacable, next month sees the god-like genius of Julian Rignall taking over — Ed)**

STEALTH FIGHTER

(Microprose)

C. Leigh of Cheadle in Cheshire wrote to say "I DID IT". Did what, one wonders? "I got the Congressional Medal Of Honour," says Mr Leigh. How, pray tell, did you achieve this monumental task? "Here's how I did it..."

1) Select a Brand Spanking New pilot.
2) Set all ratings to Ultimate.
3) Select the 'Destroy The Runway North of Berlin' mission.
4) Load up your fighter with two sets of sidewinders, one set of Durandel and one set of extra fuel.
5) Take off and fly at around 1K with the throttle well back. On your way to the runway destroy the missile installation to the SW with your cannon.
6) Destroy the runway then climb to around 10K.
7) Turn on your air-to-air radar to attract the fighters (mainly SU27s with one IL-76), then use your eight sidewinders in conjunction with your cannons.
8) Climb to 80K, fly west then turn on your fuel tank and fly home to a Congressional Medal of Honour. Hoorah!

SPINDIZZY

(Electric Dreams)

Mr Finlayson (assuming, sexistly, that A is a he) is having trouble with Paul Shirley's roll-about romp, often compared by some to Atari's game-which-changed-the-state-of-the-arcade-world, *Marble Madness*. Well, the cheat mode is simple, It's **'I LIED!'** (due to the fact that Mr Shirley mentions on the title screen that there is no cheat mode. However, entering the cheat isn't quite so simple, which is why ace progger Gazza Liddon (remember him?) knocked up this little program... ooh, all of two years ago...

```
0  REM I LIED!
10 X=679
20 READ A:POKE X,A:X=X+1
30 IF A<>255 THEN 20
40 SYS 679:LOAD
50 DATA 120, 169, 52, 133, 1, 162, 6,
189, 7, 8, 157, 0, 233, 202, 16
60 DATA 247, 169, 55, 133, 1 88, 96,
255
```

So what's it do? Stop the timer, that's what. Type it in (DON'T exclude the REM statement), RUN it and follow the on-screen prompts to load a slightly altered *Spindizzy*...

BOUNDER

(Gremlin Graphics)

A. Finlayson from Blackpool also wrote to say "thank God!" as he's been struck on this ageing classics and needs a birra help. Well, A, here's the cheat mode for this little chestnut... Hold down **1, Q, A, Z** and the **SPACE BAR** on the title screen until the border changes colour to indicate that the cheat mode is operative (it takes about 30 seconds). You will now have unlimited balls to play with... (*Ooo-er — Ed*)

GIMME SOME HELP, NOW

(IF NOT SOONER)

Stephen Frampton of Coventry in Warwickshire needs listings for disk versions of games — but unfortunately he didn't mention *which* games. But bearing this in mind, can anyone supply listings for cassette AND disk (without messing around with the disk itself, please)?

Johnathan Gyde of Painswick in Gloucester needs help with Palace's *Barbarian* and Activision's conversion of *Rampage* (both on the 64). Now I'm such a busy chap I didn't have time to dig anything out, so does anyone feel generous enough to supply a working listing for one (or both) of these golden oldies (on the *We Are The Champions* compilation, one would assume).

Lee Callis of Evington in Leicester is down on his knees begging for help (in the form of listings) for Software Projects' conversion of *Dragon's Lair*, US Gold's arcade game version of *Masters Of The Universe*, Elite's conversion of *1942*, *Space Harrier* and *Paperboy*, and lastly US Gold's *Gauntlet II*. What a greedy goat. But can you help satisfy his appetite?

Poor old (well, probably quite young actually) Rick Swan. He bought Imagine's *Hyper Sports* and reckons he wasted his money. why? Well... "The problem is that after looking forward to all the mega-trendy events I discovered that I could only get to the third event." Oh dear. "So could you please, please, please give me a listing so that I could choose the events I want to compete in?" I'm afraid I can't, Rick. But I'm sure someone somewhere knows a man who can.

the god-like genius of GARY PENN

MONTY ON THE RUN

(Gremlin)

Blimey, there are a fair few chaps and chapesses with mole problems. So here's the cheat mode once again... Enter I WANT TO CHEAT on the high score table, then start the game. On the second screen you should see a little boat that wasn't there before. Get the boat and you should be invincible. As for the Survival Kit... I can't remember what you need – aaaaargh.

OOPS-A-DAISY

"Gor Blimey, Mary Poppins, there were a fair few cock-ups in the last issue, eh?"

"Not 'alf, Fred. I was particularly surprised to see that teensy weensy mistake in the *Karnov* listing. You know, the one where the '1' in line 1 should have been an 'I'."

"Lumme, that was a bit 'arry 'n' Billy and no mistake. The same thing 'appened in the *Impossible Mission II* listing 'n' all — AND it di'n't work, neither. Strike a light, what is the world coming to, eh?"

Oh deary me *(I think dreary's more appropriate, Gaz — Ed)*. Quite. Plop went me credibility when *Skate Or Die* came out as *Skate Crazy*, and Thrrrrp it went again when I saw the *Football Director* advert on the opposite page after saying I hadn't heard of it. Ahem. Anyway, here's a corrected version of the *Impossible Mission II* listing...

```
0  PRINT CHR$(147)
1  FOR I=560 TO 609:REAI A$
2  L=ASC(LEFT$(AS,1)):L=L−55:IF
L<5 THEN L=L+7
3  R=ASC(RIGHT$(A$,1)):R=R−55:IF
R<5 THEN R=R+7
4  V=(L*16)+R:C=C+V:POKE
I,V:NEXT
5  IF C<>5551 THEN PRINT"DATA
ERROR!":END
6  PRINT"SAVE LISTING FOR FUTURE
USE"
7  PRINT:PRINT"SYS 560 TO START"
10  DATA
20,56,F5,A9,78,8D,D0,08,A9,3A
11  DATA
8D,D1,08,4C,10,08,19,4D,8D,BE
12  DATA
A0,A9,02,8D,BF,A0,4C,E6,9F,A9
13  DATA
0C,8D,EC,28,A9,00,8D,17,3F,A9
14  DATA
AD,8D,1F,3F,8D,13,4C,80,08
```

HA HE HO

POKEs are dreary. Listings are for dullards. Mike's never miserable. OK, so I don't really mean it, but I thought it was about time we livened up this section with some terribly (un) funny computer jokes and wheezes. Here's a couple I tried on Gary Liddon...

1) Turn on your 64 and type TE=64738 (RETURN) then clear the screen. Now you can say: "Hey, wow, coo, guess what, Gaz (or whatever your friend is called)..." To which he replies: "What?" You say: "Yeah, I've found a brill new command on the 64 — look..." And you type in SYSTEM RESET (RETURN), the 64 resets itself, and you look really clever (honest), although if you try it on Gaz you get a funny look that says 'My God, what a silly git', so don't try it on him if you see him at any computer shows.

2) When your mate is loading something (preferably from disk), get him to talk to you. Then when he's not looking at the 64 you can trick him by saying: "Hey, Gaz, it's loaded." Then he turns round and looks a proper 'nana because it hasn't really loaded! (Ha ha ha). You get a funny look from Gaz though, one that says 'My God, what a silly git', so...

Finally, Casey Gallacher of The Street in Swallowfield read and liked Mike's piracy piece in the June issue (*Oh joy — Ed*), and mentioned that he occasionally hacks computer games. During his many frolics he discovered some 'funny' messages from the programmers of loaders. In the loader of Imagine's conversion of *Renegade* can be found "WELCOME TO FREELOAD BY PAUL HUGHES 25/8/87", and in *The Holy Grail*'s loader there resides: "WELL DONE — WELL CRACKED!". Other coding chuckles include "HELLO HACKER I HOPE YOU HAVE FUN WITH THIS LOADER" in Activision's *Wonder Boy*, "HAVE FUN HACKER! PAUL H MASTER OF THE CIA" in *Rastan*'s loader, and a lengthy rant from Dave Collier in *Terra Cresta*'s loader. Casey's point: "Surely this encourages people to hack?" That as may be, but then Casey points out that: "this is not an excuse for piracy as it's still theft." Any more for any more?

MARAUDER

(Hewson)

A little cheat courtesy of Tim and Ian Fraser...

Hold down the Commodore key, Q, 2 and the SPACE BAR to disable sprite collision. The words 'CHEAT ON' appear at the bottom of the screen.

LAZER TAG

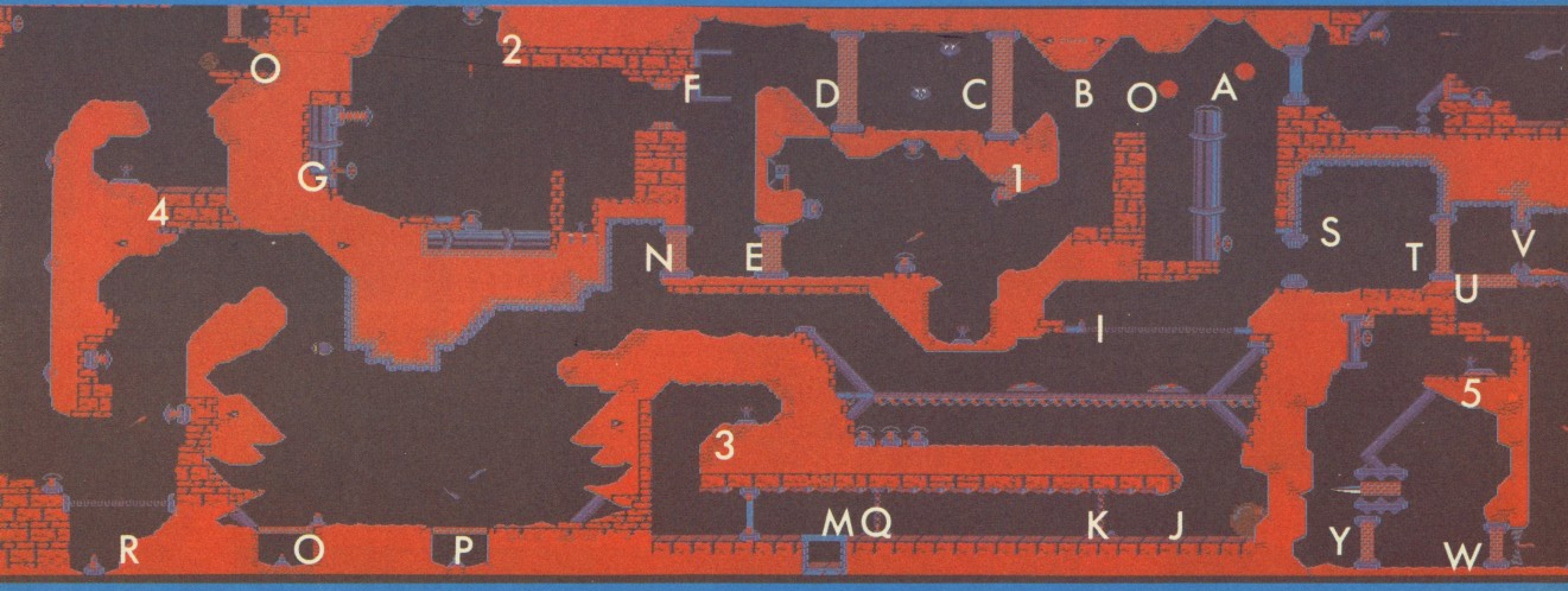
(US Gold)

You're probably a super wimp if you can't complete this, but here's a Tim and Ian Fraser listing just in case.

```
0  PRINTCHR$(147): POKE53265,0:
POKE53296,1
1  FORI=544TO581: READA$
2  L=ASC(LEFT$(A$,1)): L=L−55:
IFL(5THENL=L+7
3  R=ASC(RIGHT$(A$,1)): R=R−55f:
IFR<5THENR=R+7
4  V=(L★16)+R: C=C+V: POKEI,V:
NEXT
5  POKE53296,0: POKE53265,27
6  IFC<>3214 THEN PRINT "DATA
ERROR!": END
7  PRINT "SAVE LISTING FOR
FUTURE USE"
8  PRINT: PRINT "SYS 544 TO
START"
10  DATA 20, 56, F5, A9, 08, 8D, D0,
08, A9, 3A
11  DATA 8D, D1, 08, 4C, 10, 08, A9,
3D, 8D, 30
12  DATA 08, A9, 02, 8D, 31, 08, 4C,
10, 08, A9
13  DATA AD, 8D, 51, 26, 4C, 00, 3A,
00, 00, 00
```

Type in the listing, RUN it, and follow the on-screen prompts for infinite lives.

AIRWOLF



Here's a map and solution to Elite's recently rereleased cheapo . . .

1 Sector one is the easiest challenge of the lot. You come out of the base and fly left avoiding the boulders and drop down funnel (B). Rescue your man. You cannot return the way you came, remember. To get back you must shoot pillar wall (E) and fly out. Don't get in the lift, but follow it up. Turn right and shoot down wall (D). Fly through past the Seekers and back to base. Did you remember to shoot wall (C) down at the start? This is your route back to base after every rescue. Whatever sector you have come through you must return via walls (D) and (C).

2 Make your way through sector (1) as before. Shoot down wall (E) and follow lift up. Turn left and drop down. Your scientist is directly beneath you. You cannot pick him up because he is standing on water. To make him rise up shoot valve (G). The door at the top right will now automatically close. To reopen and make your escape with the man, you must shoot bolt (H). Remember you must make your way back via the Seekers, through walls (D) and (C). Seekers sap your shields so avoid them as you make your way through.

3 Take funnel (A) and drop down to the laser line. Shoot pin (I) to make it disappear. Hover over the monorail and shoot a hole through. Drop through, squeezing past boulder (J). You must now fly left as rapidly as possible shooting pins (K), (L) and (M). The final one will open up the trap door and the boulder you have activated will fall in. Hug that pillar on the left until it has gone. They fly back to pin (J) where the boulder once was. Shoot it and your way is clear to rescue your man. Return as advised previously.

4 Things get tough now. Take tunnel (B) and fly through sector one. Shoot through walls (E) and (N). Drop down into the large caverns. Two godheads either side shoot five bolts from their eyes. Avoid these. Shoot the two buttons at the bottom. Fly vertically up until you reach the top where a conveyor belt is dropping bouders (Q). You are now clear to make your rescue.

5 Fly down tunnel (A) and into cave (S). Immobilise flying saucer and shoot down walls (T) and (U). Do not proceed until you have shut yourself in by shooting (V). This reverses the firebolts and allows you to travel vertically down. At the bottom shoot down wall (W)whilst avoiding the sparks. Fire in the spike (shoot it when the diamond disappears) shoot away wall (Y) and make your way up to rescue your man.

GIANA SISTERS

Why has Julian Rignall got a sweaty joystick? He's been playing with the Giana Sisters, that's why. In an exclusive shock horror sensation he has decided to reveal his juiciest tips.

Although each level is played on a strict time limit, don't thunder along at breakneck speed. Caution is of the essence — so take time and look to see what hazards are coming up, and decide how to tackle them.

The other advantage of taking things slowly is that if you rush along, more aliens appear. Taking things at a steady pace sees creatures coming on slowly, making it easier to tackle them.

Some of the jumps require almost pixel-perfect precision. For long jumps make sure you have plenty of speed and jump right from the edge of the platform, keeping the joystick pushed diagonally up right. If a low roof is present, keep the joystick right during the jump, tapping diagonally upwards very quickly. It sounds like a tricky move, but once perfected, you shouldn't have any problems with banging against the ceiling and falling down holes.

Diamonds are a key part of the game, since collecting 100 gives an extra life. Try and grab as many diamonds as possible to ensure a steady supply of extra lives. A good player can add an extra Giana to his supply every third or fourth screen – highly useful if the game is to be beaten!

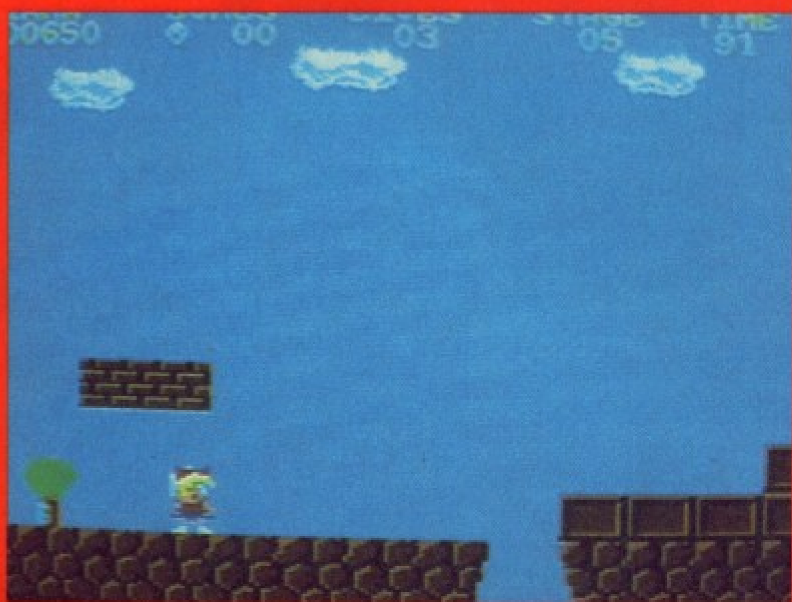
Use the extra weapons with care. Water should be used to douse flames — although the effect is temporary, and there is no indication when the effect has worn off. Clocks should be used against bouncing balls, and magic bombs in times of severe crisis.

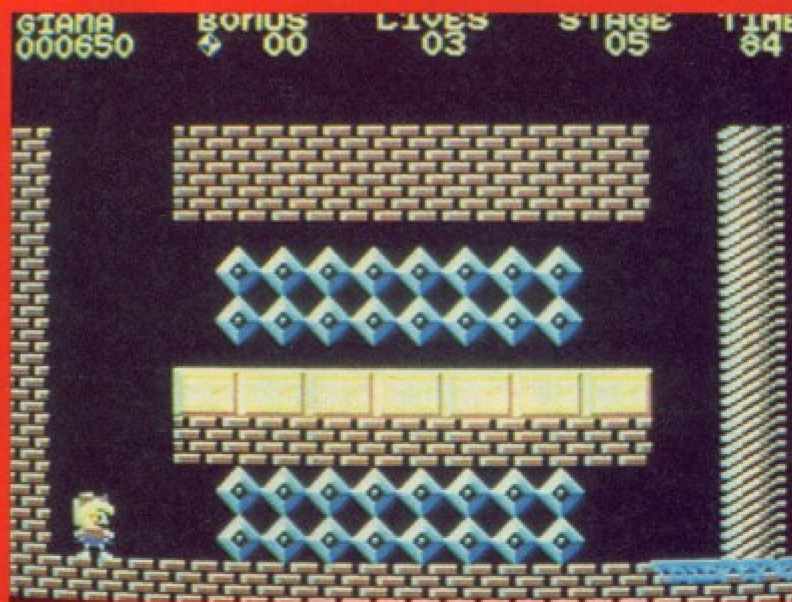
Don't hit a block above you if there is a creature walking on it – it'll fall down onto your head.

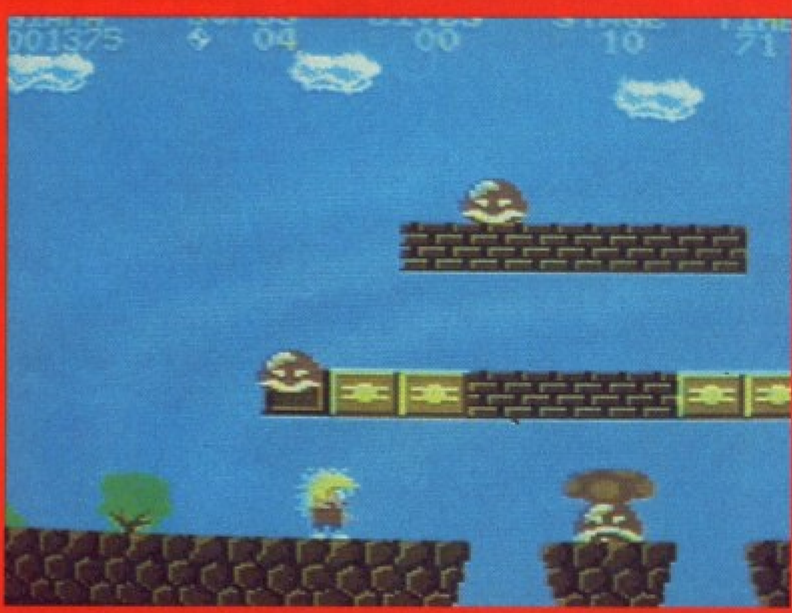
Finally, if you're a wimp and can't play the game, press the A R M I and N keys at the same time to automatically skip a level. Using this even a novice can finish the game!

THE SECRET ROOMS

These are a rich source of diamonds, and are therefore vital to help ensure a regular supply of extra lives.

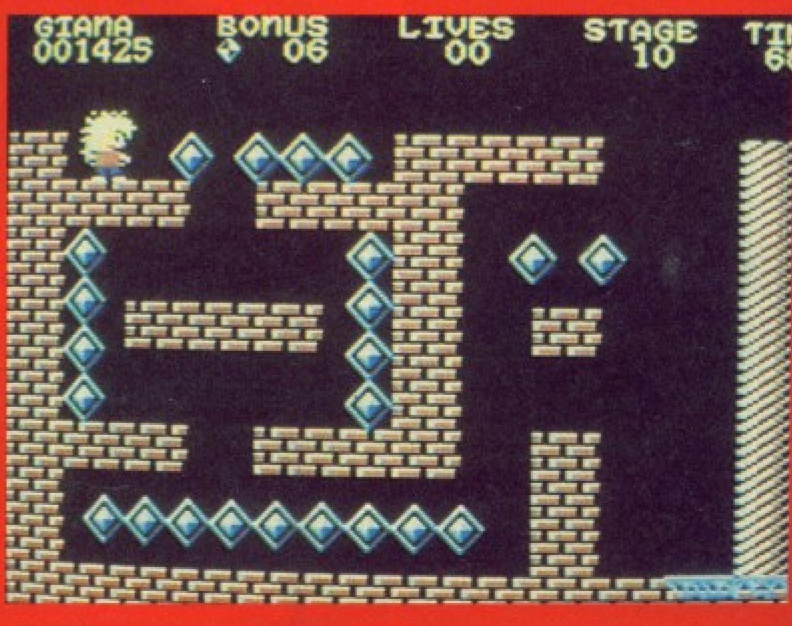




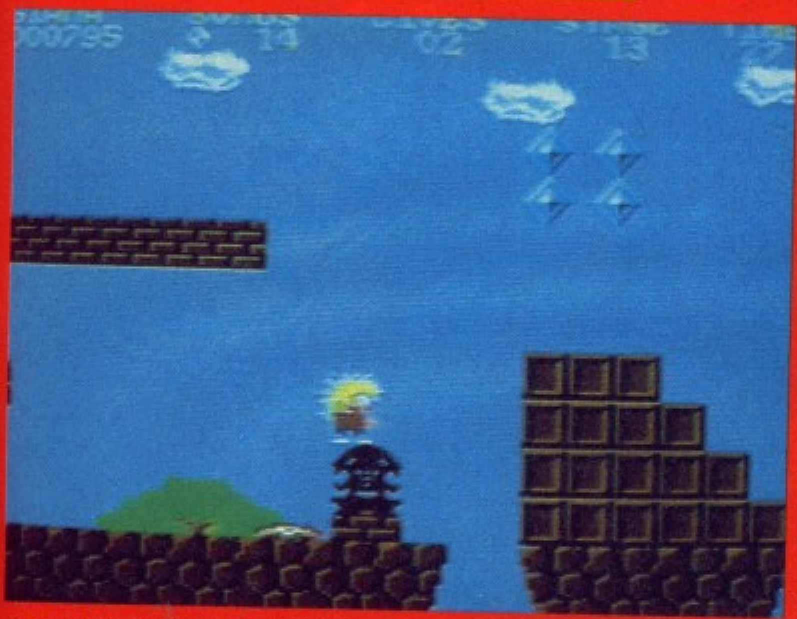


SECRET ROOM TWO

Is found on level five. Just drop down the hole, and a wealth of diamonds are yours for the taking.



play TO WIN



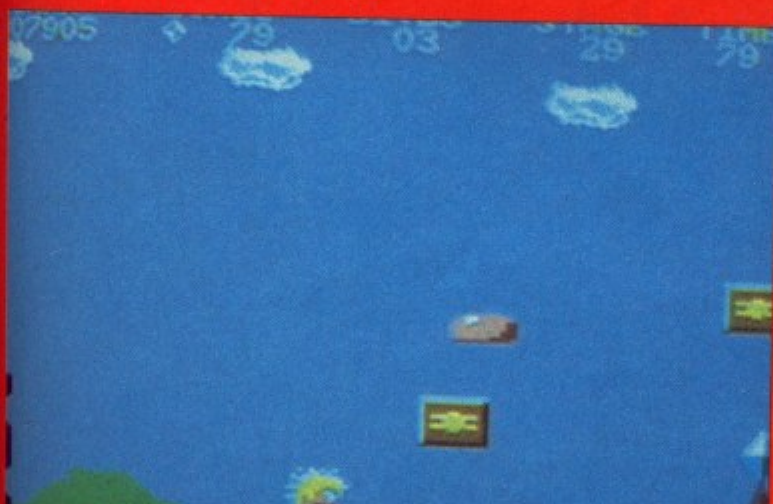
SECRET ROOM THREE

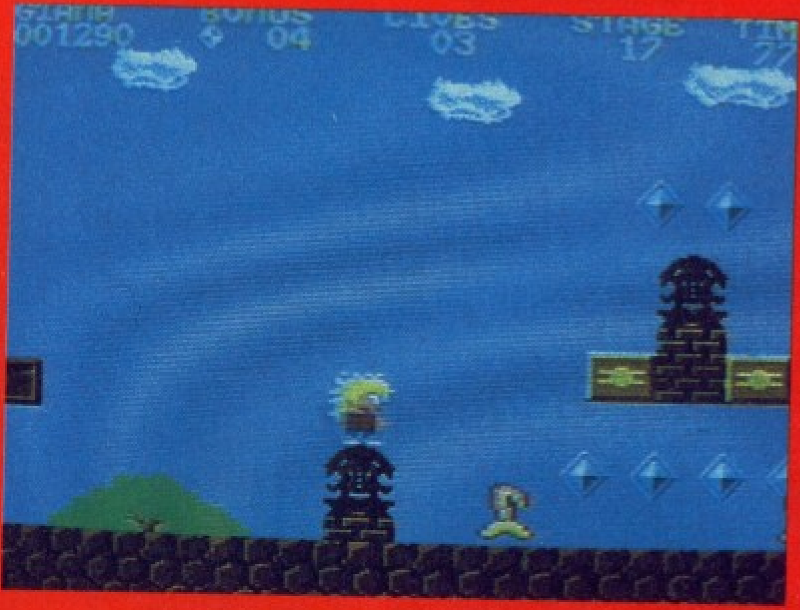
Can be found on level 13. Leaping into the room is easy enough — but watch out when you're leaving since a jump to the right results in Giana falling back into the hole.



SECRET ROOM FIVE

The final secret room is found on level 29 — it's in the third of the four holes. Be careful when you're jumping to it, since it's easy to bash your head against the block and fall into the hole beneath. Keep your wits about you when you leave the room, and all should be hunky dory.



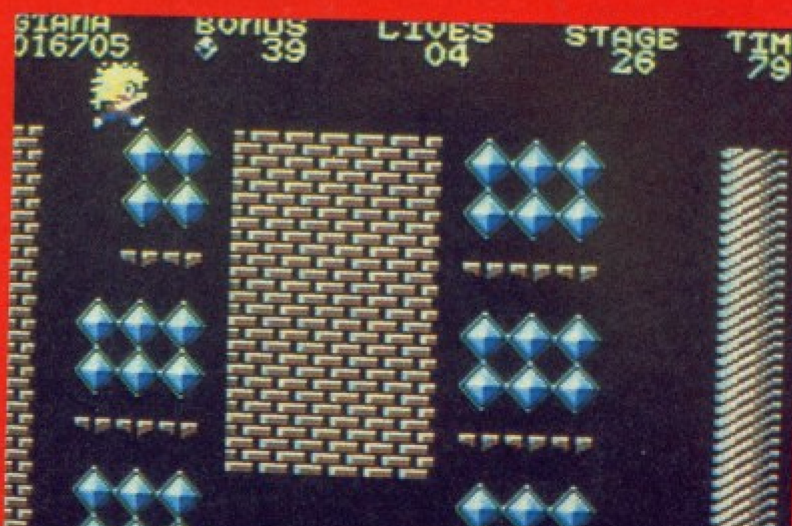


Watch out for warps — these are scattered throughout the game, and allow several screens to be skipped at a time. A warp block is invisible until head-butted, whereupon it appears and Giana automatically jumps the next three screens. The example shown is on level 17. Just stand on the black object and jump, and you'll be warped forward.

SECRET ROOM FOUR

Is on level 21. Jump into the hole, collect all the diamonds and exit in either direction. Be careful of the flames as you continue on your travels.





ARCADES

GALAXY FORCE

SEGA 1 x £1

At the exclusive UK preview of *Galaxy Force* in their London premises, distributors Brent Leisure had to erect a tent extension to their main entrance. The reason? Well, this latest in Sega's series of state-of-the-art dedicated simulators simply wouldn't fit into the showroom!

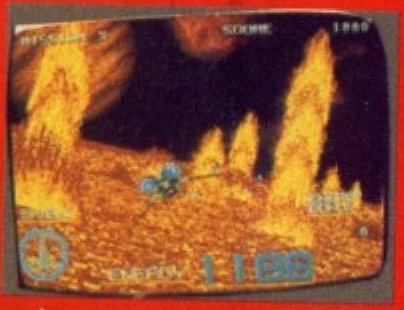
Yes, even by Sega's recent standards, *Galaxy Force* is housed in an unusually massive console. Costing something like double the price of a spanking new *Afterburner de Luxe*, the enormous space capsule shaped machine could pass for a fairground ride. It takes up nearly ten feet by ten feet, for a start which rules out the possibility of your local chippie getting one. (There will, of course, be an upright and rather smaller mini-deluxe version available in due course, but we're fairly sure that this is the one that will be causing the most dropped jaws over the coming months). And if you're not impressed by the sheer scale of the thing, you will be by its movement: in addition to back-and-forward and lateral shifting, *Galaxy Force* spins around a complete circle (well, nearly — it actually turns through 335°, but who's complaining?). We are, if you haven't deduced as much by now, talking BIG.

But don't just stand there gaping — take your courage in your hands (and your quid from your pocket), step into the protective surround and clamber aboard. As soon as you're sitting comfortably you're given a choice of five different spacescapes to fly through, ranging from seas of lava to Milky Way-style meteorite storms. Once you've chosen your field of combat, brace yourself and press the start button. You're immediately flung backwards as you blast off.

The controls consist of a joystick to your right hand and a speed-up/slow-down gear shift to your left. Housed in the joystick are your weapons, rockets and heat-seeking missiles. The screen is, as you might expect, impressively large, and the graphics bright and vivid, even more detailed than *Afterburner*'s, and with many confusingly camouflaged bits to keep you on your toes. Enemy fighters mingle in the distance with rocks and balls of lava, but, especially if you're travelling at normal to fast speed, they don't stay in the distance for long. Flames leap up to meet you, you swerve wildly to avoid rocks and missiles, swerve again to avoid walls, fly low under



Nerve centre ahoy!



The Fields of Fire.



Ready for lift-off.

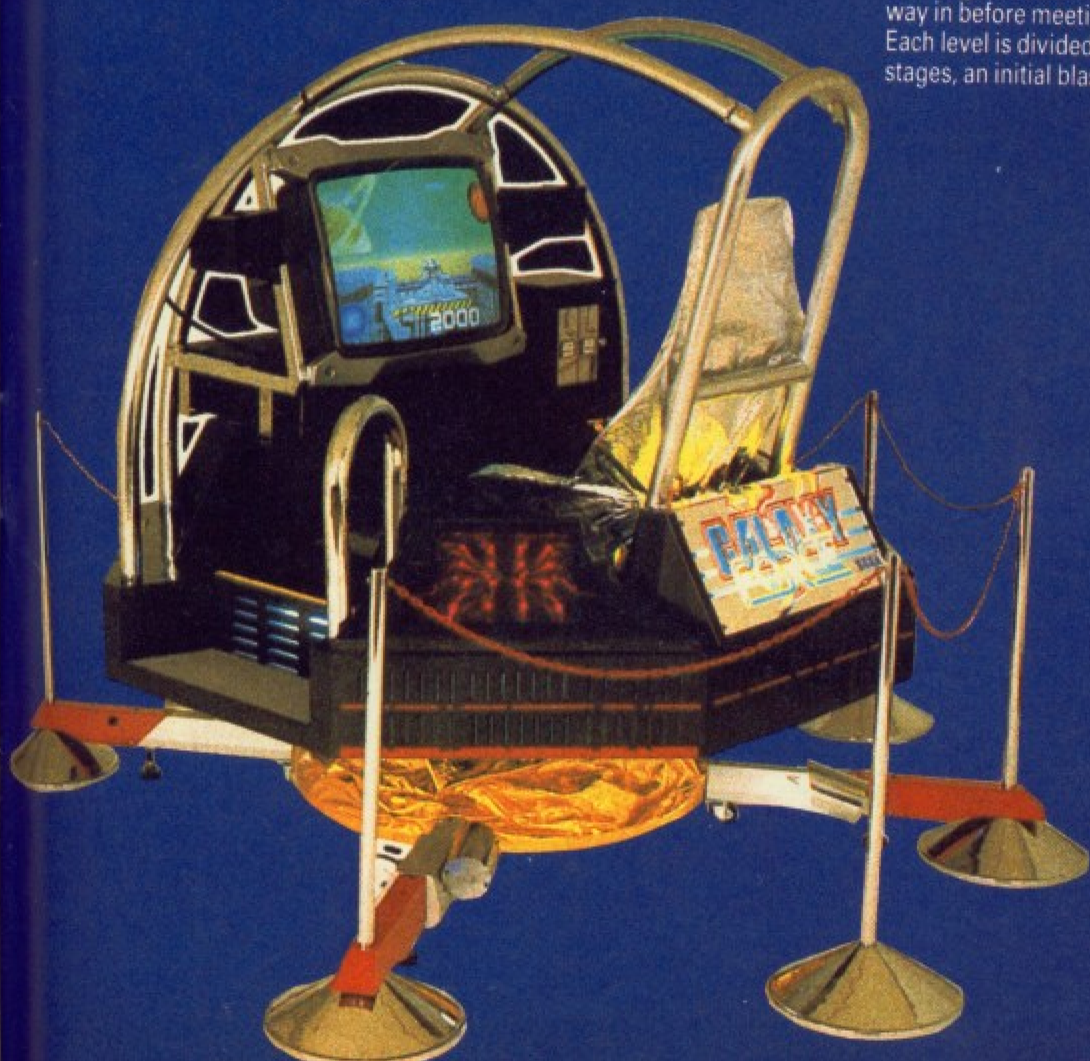
obstacles, fly high over 'em, and all the while blasting everything in sight. The effect is a combination of *Afterburner* and the deluxe *Wec Le Mans*, with incredible on-screen speed, bewildering action, tremendous graphics and the physical sensation of being thrown around the skies.

Luckily you have a shield and energy level rather than a straight one-hit-and-that's-it approach to life, so you should be able to get at least a little way in before meeting a sticky end. Each level is divided into a couple of stages, an initial blast through open skies/space, and then you get to penetrate the heart of the enemy's base, which involves guiding your trusty craft through a most confusing maze of underground tunnels packed with obstacles, gun emplacements and enemy craft before attempting to take on and destroy the nerve centre.

As with its illustrious predecessor *Afterburner*, *Galaxy Force* is often bewilderingly fast, and instinct rather than judgement tends to be the key to success. But the slow-down option does give you some breathing space and the shield allows you to settle into the game without the danger of immediate destruction.

The gameplay is certainly speedy and engaging, and the sounds and graphics are pretty hot, but there's no doubt that *Galaxy Force*'s major appeal is going to be as a climb-into simulator. Frankly, I can't see the upright version having the same appeal as the hydraulic wonder that is the super deluxe version. And this means that, while Sega will undoubtedly be asking for the proverbial Loadsamoney for conversion rights, the chances of a faithful home version appearing are slim. Very slim.

Nick Kelly



GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
TOUGHNESS	8
ENDURANCE	7
CONVERTABILITY	3
OVERALL	8



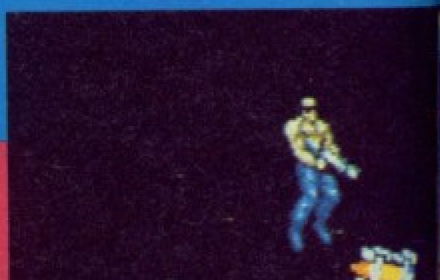
Meet the God Of War.



Stock up in the shop.



Blast the reptile guards.



FORGOTTEN WORLD

CAPCOM
3 x 10p

Arcade Star

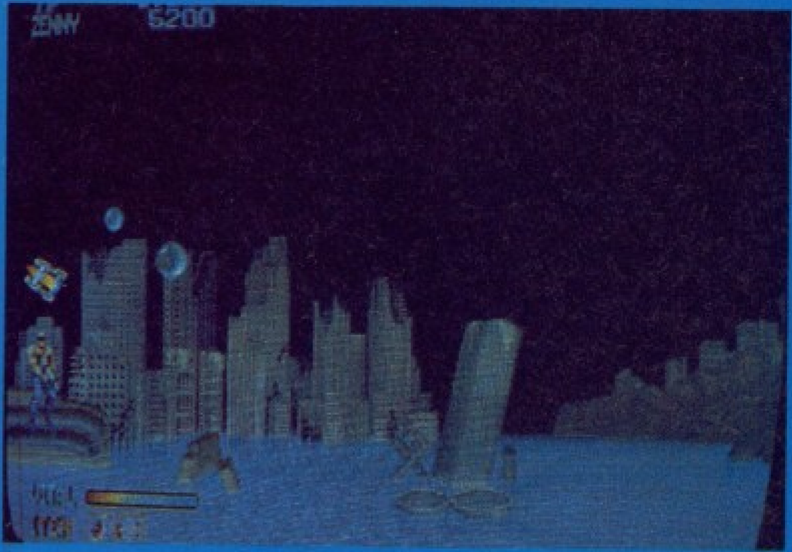
By virtue of a cunningly concluded ten-game deal between the two companies, US Gold are to convert all the new Capcom coin-op products due for release well into next year for the home market. And if Capcom have many games like *Forgotten World* up their sleeves, all I can say is smart work, US Gold.

Forgotten World's basic scenario finds you and an optional companion fighting your way through a horizontally-scrolling planetscape somewhere between an underground sewer system and an ancient Inca temple. Who are you fighting? A bizarre collection of lizard men, sea anenomes, piles of self-fragmenting and reassembling junk, giant water snakes and, of course, a selection of fairly tough super-monsters. And who are you? Well, you're a couple of very modern looking guerillas equipped with automatic weaponry, anti-grav capabilities and a health meter.

The first thing you're liable to notice about *Forgotten World* is the control system. Both your character and his weapon have to be moved up and down, and to accomplish this Capcom have installed a rather nifty new device. As well as your standard joystick, you also get a heavy round dial. The latter controls your firing: press it down to blast, turn it to change your weapon's angle of fire. This device really does put you in control.

The actual gameplay isn't a trillion miles away from *Gryzor*, being fast and furious. The graphics, however, are in a different league altogether: against a background of nuclear devastation, run-down scrapers and miles of pipes, the nasties and

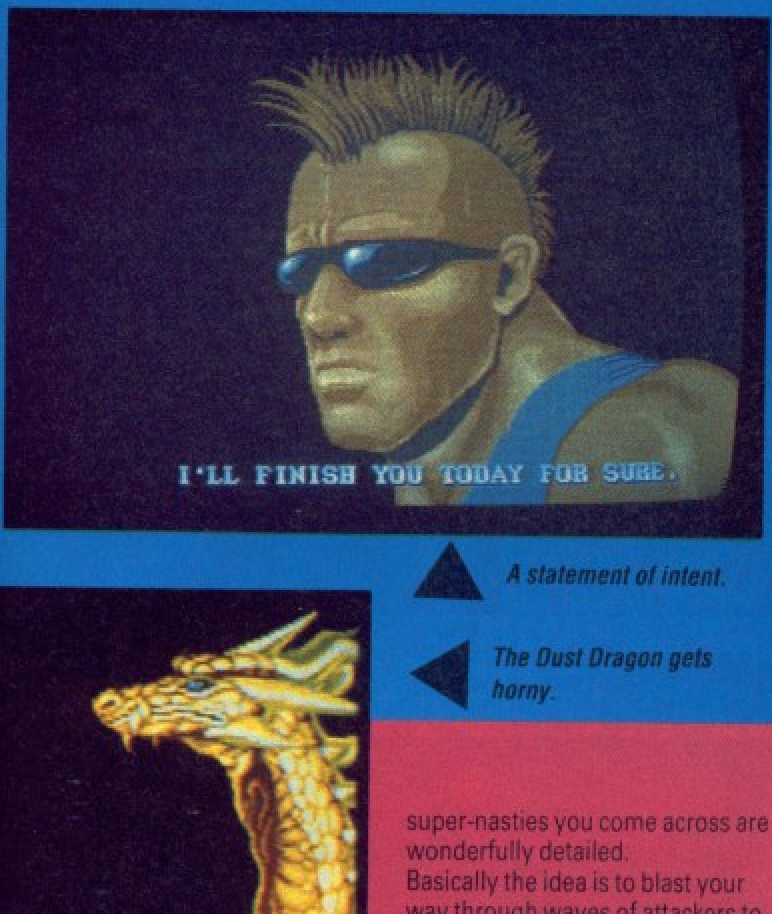
ARC



No wonder it was forgotten!



Monsters Inc.



A statement of intent.



The Dust Dragon gets horny.

Arcade Star

super-nasties you come across are wonderfully detailed.
Basically the idea is to blast your way through waves of attackers to kill a series of major monsters. Each minor meany you kill will leave behind a pearl to be picked up. These add up to hard cash which you can use to purchase enhancements in the small shops which you occasionally — and rather surprisingly — encounter in this devastated landscape. When you make it into one of these emporia, you are greeted by a swoonsome shop assistant who offers you a choice of various weapon pods (including the likes of napalm and rockets) to accompany you (only one allowed at any time, I'm afraid), extra power for the arms you already possess, energy and health restorative and information. The latter is sometimes superfluous — it's fairly obvious for instance that the dust dragon's vulnerable spot is its heart because it protects it by shooting up spikes in front of it — but other times you can spend a lot of lives, and "continue" ten pees, trying to work out the best tactics for yourself.

The level of detail in *Forgotten World* is impressive: when you're flying through the sections which are full of piping, for example, careless shooting will actually increase your peril because the pipes rupture and spew out flames when shot.

Perhaps the most impressive stage that I reached in *FW* was when I got to take on the God of War. After battling through a particularly tough section you come upon an alter with a tiny priest bowing before it. Not much of a foe, you think, until you realise that the "temple wall" is just the midriff of an absolutely enormous monster whose upper body is initially completely out of screen. Slowly you scroll upwards as more and more of your enemy becomes revealed. Finally you arrive at the head and chest, and they are not a pretty sight. Periodically one or other of his hands reaches across and tries to squeeze the life out of you as you frantically pump away at him. And pumping away at the gnarled features won't do you much good either: only those who have had the foresight to spend a few bucks at the previous shopping stop on information will know that the God Of War's most vulnerable spots are his shoulders.

Yup, this Capcom newie really is summat else. If GoI/Capcom can get anything like this level of detail and gameplay onto a 64, well, lucky ol' you.

Nick Kelly

GRAPHICS:	9
SOUND:	8
TOUGHNESS:	8
ENDURANCE:	8
CONVERTABILITY:	8
OVERALL:	8

THE MAIN EVENT

KONAMI
2 x 10p

Call me a cynic if you will, but whenever I've watched Giant Haystacks, Big Daddy and the rest of 'em on the box on a Saturday afternoon, I've never been able to take the howls of pain, grunts and throws completely seriously. Once you grasp the fairly obvious fact that the whole lot is orchestrated and planned to the last detail, it's really not possible to think of it as a sport, except in the same sense as, say, ice skating.

Konami's new tag wrestling coin-op, however, takes a refreshingly new approach to this "sport": instead of everybody in the ring knowing exactly what's going on, nobody does. Or, to be rather more accurate, I certainly didn't.

The Main Event looks promising enough on first sight: a big dedicated console housing some fine graphics and digitised speech that would put that old phoney Kent Walton himself to shame. Sadly, however, the controls aren't quite so impressive. Apart from a joystick to control how your fighters move around the ring there are three buttons, which are used to control about a dozen different moves. For example, the Action button is used to make a tag, pull your opponent up from the canvas, bounce off the ropes *and* pick up the chair. How can you tell which one you're going to activate by pressing the button, you ask? Well, that's the problem — while obviously your relative positions and the particular stage of play in the bout will eliminate some of the possibilities, it still seems a bit too arbitrary and haphazard. It's difficult to escape the feeling that really the game's doing more of the work than you are. The Technique button is your straightforward hitting/kicking control, but, just to confuse you further, there's a Big Play button which controls sitting on an opponent, dismounting him, and various other spectacular moves — but only when it's flashing can it be used!

With all these different permutations and controls to keep in your head — and at your fingertips — *The Main Event* can't fairly be described as easily playable.

Nevertheless, being a four-player dedicated cabinet, I imagine quite a lot of people will be trying their hands at it this summer.

Briefly, for those who don't know much about tag team wrestling, there are two teams of two players in each bout, typically named, as here, The Maui Mauler, Conan The Barbarian and so on. Only one member of each team is allowed in the ring at any one time, so the partners have to wait at the ringside to be "tagged" (ie: touched by their team-mate). Once a tag has taken place the tagged player is allowed into the ring, with his team-mate stepping out. Of course, being primarily a piece of theatre, with goodies and baddies easily identifiable by their sportsmanship and garb, this basic theory often goes awry, with untagged partners hopping in to help out the team anyway and commit all manner of other illegalities besides.

In *The Main Event*, up to four of you can take part, duffing one another up, tagging your partner when things get a bit rocky and generally having a whale of a time. The neat graphics and digitised speech will doubtless entertain you for a little while — even if, to be brutally honest, you have absolutely no idea how you managed to toss the Maui Mauler out of the ring. But once you've got used to the funny bits, I'm afraid — unless you're much better at discovering a playing method than I was — the appeal is likely to fade fairly drastically. While I'm prepared to accept that *The Main Event* may not actually be yer genuine interactive movie, it might as well be with gameplay this tough and confusing. A miss, I'm afraid.

Nick Kelly

And in the blue corner . . .



Ah-one! Ah-two! Ahh . . .



Can Conan break the headlock?



GRAPHICS:	7
SOUND:	7
TOUGHNESS:	8
ENDURANCE:	3
CONVERTABILITY:	4
OVERALL:	4

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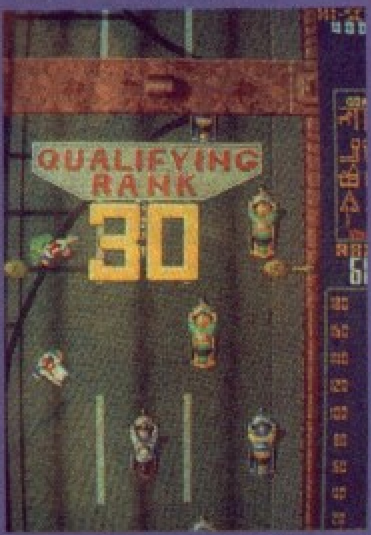
ARCADES

And here are a few more coin-op newies that'll be competing for your holiday dosh . . .

RALLY BIKE

TAITO
2 x 10p

Taito are also getting into the overhead racing scene this weather, but their latest product stars motor bikes not cars. In *Rally Bike*, you get to take part in a race along fairly classic principles. You start off with a ranking and you've got to try to push it up in order to qualify for subsequent levels. Control is by eight-way joystick movement, and though you can actually slow to a standstill, it's still very simple to crash into trees, rocks and other cyclists. There are petrol cannisters to run over (these result in your pulling over briefly to tank up) and speed-up icons to boost your pace. Once again, some nice graphics, particularly pretty being the bikes' banking motion when they turn bends. Not bad at all.



LAST DUEL

CAPCOM
2 x 10p

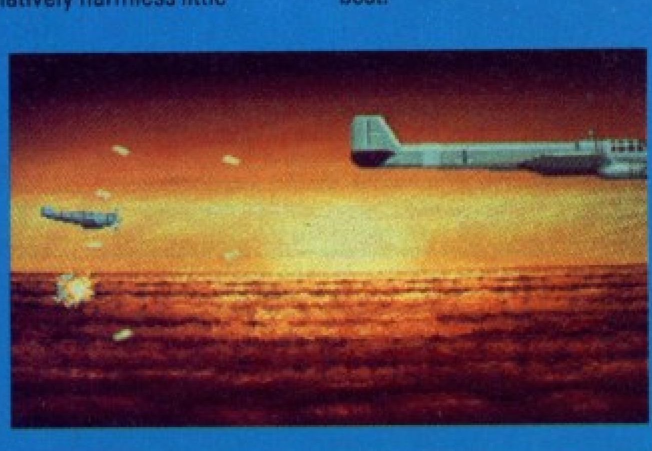
Yet another one that you're guaranteed to be seeing on your 64 within the next 12 months or so thanks to the Capcom/ US Gold tie-up mentioned elsewhere, *Last Duel* comes with about four paragraphs of fairly involved on-screen explanatory text, but basically the idea can be summarised as follows: small car/ tank speeds along a twisting elevated roadway absolutely crammed with alien attackers; object is to blast whatever you can, bounce over the rest and stay on the highway at all costs. There are enhancements of course, but the main trick to worry about here is timing your pressing of the jump button to ensure optimum lifetime. Fast-moving, addictive and coming your way.



P-47

JALECO
2 x 10p

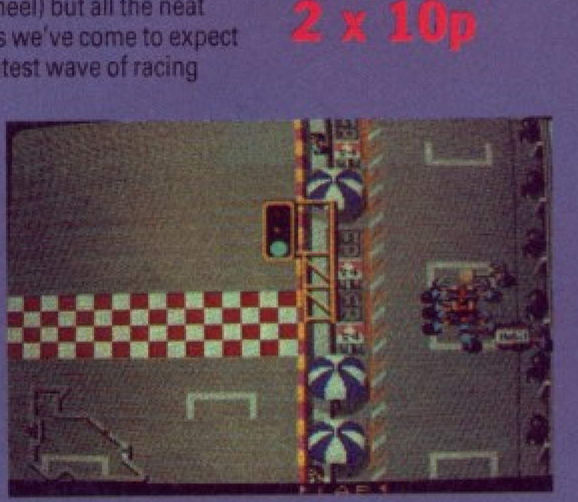
Sub-titled *The Freedom Fighter, P-47* is a pretty impressive horizontally-scrolling aerial shoot 'em up set in WWII. For one or two players, the idea is, as always to blast and bomb your way past ground and air installations, picking up enhancements en route. In *P-47*, the enemy are finely-detailed German fighters, bombers, rockets, field guns and munitions trains, and enhancements, by way of extra weaponry, are acquired by shooting the relatively harmless little helicopters you come across and picking up the icon they leave behind. At the end of each level you get a monstrous enemy craft to defeat, which takes lots of blasting, bombing and dodging, before you get to move onto the next level. Levels include Northern France, the sky over the Pacific Ocean and North Africa, and very pretty they are too. With brilliant addictive blasting and impressive graphics, this one looks set to be Jaleco's most successful product to date; it's certainly their best.



F-1 DREAM

Yet another overhead driving game, this time from Capcom. Nearer to Sega's *Hot Rod* than Konami's *Checkered Flag* in appearance, but with gameplay rather better than the former's (thank goodness) *F-1 Dream* sends drivers with names like N. Munsell and A. Prest weaving their ways around a winding track lined with spectators. Slightly wierd controls (joystick rather than steering wheel) but all the neat graphic bits we've come to expect from this latest wave of racing games (pit-stops, etc.) and a couple of nice little extras. We particularly liked the way that the tiny spectators at the edge of the track fled whenever a car spun out of control towards a barrier. Not wildly original, of course, but definitely worth a couple of bob from your summer hols ten pee budget.

CAPCOM
2 x 10p



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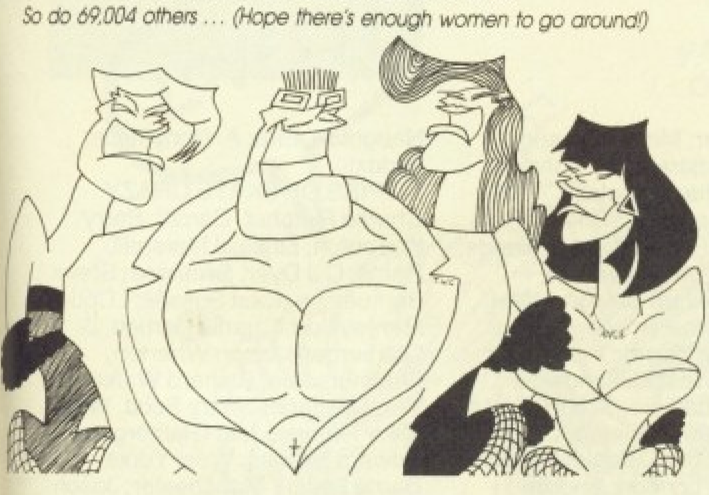
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RESULTS

PETER GABRIEL COMPO

So you want a copy of Peter Gabriel's album do you? Well, obviously quite a lot of you do, as we've had simply squillions of entries, all of them bearing the correct answer, and that was of course that both Peter Gabriel and Phil 'receding' Collins used to be in the flakey pop-group Genesis (in fact, Phil still is). The 5 of you lucky enough to be pulled out of the CU bowler hat are listed below. . . .
Richard Walker, Dudley; A. Person, Notts; Theresa Robertson, Lincs; Mr N G Havard, Swansea; Wayne Dibben, Upminster.

SALAMANDER COMPO

My goodness! What a lot of entries we had for our fantabulous Salamander-in-a-suitcase compo. After much wading through the mountains of postcards, we managed to pick out a winner and 25 runners-up. For your information, the correct answers were: 1. Jerboa; 2. Mr. Spock; 3. Torquemada; 4. Konami; and as I'm sure you can't wait to find out, the lucky winners are:
SALAMANDER COIN-OP
Andrew Penrose, Maidstone.
COPIES OF THE GAME
J R Smith, Heathfield; Jason Paris, Gwent; Spencer James, Swansea; Peter Fagg, Folkestone; Steve Bromfield, Evesham; Neil Skinner, Sheffield; Hwo Yip Lam, Leicester; John Ward, Blackpool; Edward Waterfield, Stourbridge; Philip Rushton, Birmingham; G Maughan, Bedworth; Karl Partridge, Swansea; Richard Mullens, Emsworth; Mark Frampton, Coventry; David Tolley, Mexborough; William Duff, Linwood; Tom Blakeson, Harrogate; Graham Ruston, Birmingham; Chi-Ho Lam, West Finchley; P Tupman, Nottingham; Mark Danaher, Chelmsford; G Green, Sunderland; Andrew Hocknell, Stafford; Mark Shaw, Stoke-on-Trent; Richard Rawson, Leeds.

SISTER COMPO

The overall winner of the *Sister Compo*, who gets a fab all-expenses paid trip to Rainbow Arts H.Q. in Deutchland, is:
Brett Patterson, Sheffield.
And the 25 slightly less lucky runners up are as follows: Matti Kennedy, Cornwall; Tony Hughes, Manchester; Melinda Brand, Victoria, Australia; M. Spheri, Mosta, Malta; Nicholas Winchester, Berks; Cosmo Roe, Cambs; J. Dhesi, West Midlands; Anon!, Suffolk; Steve Lee, Cambs; Edward Newiss, West Yorks; Andrew Rowley, Essex; Simon Beu, Surrey; Fiona McQuick, West Midlands; Neil Skinner, Sheffield; Simon Watson, London; Darren Winter, London; S Lewis London; C Boyle, London; T Bradshaw, London; Andrew Derby, West Midlands; David Coles, Sth Wales; R Hamilton, London; A Grimley, London.

CRAZY COMPO

Due to Gremlin's undying generosity, last month we were able to give away three pairs of well 'ard roller skates complete with afterburners and retrothrusters (*are you sure about this bit? — MP*) as well as 20 copies of the wonderous Screen Star *Skate Crazy* for the runners up. The correct answers were, for those who crave roller trivia:
1. Entry and Exit on Car Ferries
2. Rollers (what else?)
3. Papa Was A Rolling Stone.
So who's going to be knocking pedestrians over as they scream down the road on their new skates at mach 4, and who's going to be playing their free copies of *Skate Crazy?* The results are below . . .
SKATES
Michael Bell, Wiltshire, Paul Naughton, Eire; A. Nonymous, Middx;
COPIES OF SKATE CRAZY
Charlie Fletcher, Cardiff; Barry Warbuton, Lincs; J Marshall, Hants; C J Dyer, Swansea; Steve Samuelson, East Sussex; I Court, Merseyside; Charlie Bartlett, S. Glamorgan; Jason Wharton, Skelmersdale; Richard Walker, West Midlands; Gary Scott, Wilts; Mike Thomas, Mid Glamorgan; Edward Newiss, West Yorks; Barrie Leach, Manchester; Jason Pope, Warwickshire; R Lewis, Derby; Stuart Milligan, London; Charlie Roberts, West Sussex; Robert Cross, London; D. Watson, London; P. Piper, Edinburgh.

RESULTS

NEXT

HOW MANY KINDS OF SWEET SOFTWARE GROW IN AN ENGLISH COUNTRY GARDEN?

We'll tell you now of some that we know
And those I miss you'll surely pardon . . .

PARDON

Ooh arr, me lovies. Plenty o' luvverly pieces o' sarftware roipe far the pickin' in toim far next month. Aaaar, there be two noice littal sequils — Vindicator (that's Green 'Fingers' Beret II to yew) and Stargloider II. Then there's the ever fertoile Andrew Braybrook who's been a busy bee cultivating Intensity, and over there we 'ave Moicroprose's Red Starm A-Roisin which is almost in full bloom. Nart forgetting' Gremlin's Noight Raider 'n' Domark's Empoire Stroikes Baaaack — and wot a luvverly pair they are too. Course, our plot wouldn't be carmplete withowt a tasty bitter Buzz, lowds o' turf-talkin' reviews, zome zuper Arcades stoff, a really healthy patch o' Play TO Win an lowds lowds mar besoides. Now 'ow many udder maaags c'n bowst about a crop aas impressive aas thaat, eh? (Eh? — Ed).



C NEXT MONTH U

THE GRAASS IS ALWAYS GREENER ON OUR SIDE OF THE FENCE . . .
See for yourself at the end of August.

MONTH

Tommy's Tips

Dual print

I am the long-time owner of a C64 and have recently bought an Amiga A500.
What I would like is a printer which can connect directly to both machines and be fully compatible with both machines without the aid of driver software.
Could you tell me if there is any such printer available?
Thanks for any advice.
S. Andrees,
Hull

The simple answer is that any centronics (parallel) printer can be used with both the A500 and the CBM64, provided you use a suitable hardware interface with the 64. This is the only sensible way of getting full compatibility since there are actually no common printer outputs between the two machines.

To make the system really useful, why not add a T-Switch which will allow you to change the printer between the two computers without having to change any cables. I have this type of set-up myself and it is really useful to be able to use the same printer on both machines and have it wired up properly all the time.

Don't go for one of the printers that has the CBM interface built-in, because you won't get the A500 to work with it. A suitable CBM-to-centronics interface will cost between £35–£90, depending on the facilities it offers, while the T-Switch would be about £30–£50.

As for a printer, the new STAR LC-10 is excellent value and gives good quality print, but virtually any printer with a centronics input port will be suitable.

Oh, mummy

I have just acquired an SFD1001 disk drive, and a Brain Boxes IEEE 488 interface (so that I can use the drive with my Commodore 128).
My first query is, if I were to buy a games disk could I use it with my new drive? If not, would they need to be modified and if so, how? My second query is how can I copy my tape games onto disk? Will I need a motherboard to use the IEEE 488 interface and a copy cartridge at the same time?
I would appreciate some help as any mistakes could be expensive.
Peter Neal,
Bury St. Edmunds,
Suffolk

The SFD1001 is a much larger capacity disk (1 Mbyte) than either the 1571 or the 1541. As a result it has a different format to these other drives and, as far as I know, is definitely not read or write compatible with them. This means that you won't be able to load any programs, especially games which have some form of copy protection which utilises the disk ROM routines. The only way way of getting such programs to load is to save them onto a disk in the 1001 drive first. As for tape to disk copiers, or even disk to disk copiers, they may have problems running with the IEEE 488 interface connected.

I used to run a 4040 twin drive with my 64 and an IEEE 488 interface, but not one of my copiers would run while it was connected. This wasn't a great problem since for backup copies the twin 4040 was extremely handy, but with a single drive you could have a problem. Likewise with cartridges. You can only try them and see, since it would be a wise (or very foolish) man indeed that could predict with total accuracy which cartridges will work and which won't. Just try asking the suppliers before you buy any cartridge and see if they will guarantee compatibility, and make it a condition of sale that the cartridge will work correctly with your set-up. You might be surprised at the answers you get!

It is the age-old problem; although someone might bring out a better, bigger, faster drive, if it isn't totally compatible with the software for the machine it is connected to, it will always suffer from a major dearth of software in its own format. I believe the suppliers of the SFD1001 can supply some software in the right format, so your best bet must be to contact them for a full list of compatible software.



Tommy presses for action.

Tractor

I own a C64 and can have unlimited loan of a Commodore 4022P Tractor Printer; are the two compatible? In your answer please remember a couple of points. Firstly, I am new to computing — so not too much technical jargon please. Secondly, at present I am more interested in obtaining the printed word from my 64 than the quality of the printing.
A. S. Turner,
Paignton,
Devon

The 4022 printer uses a different method of communication to the C64, so the two are not compatible without some sort of 'black-box' to link them together. The 'black-box' in this case has to be a 'CBM Serial to IEEE–488 Interface' to allow the communications between the computer and the printer to work. There are only one or two such interfaces around and your local dealer should be able to obtain one for you at around £50 or so. Although an old printer, the 4022 is perfectly adequate for things like program listing and internal documents, however it lacks many of the features of more modern printers which are a fraction of its own size and weight.

One point to bear in mind is that the IEEE–488 cables are usually much more expensive than the normal Commodore cables (in fact cost was one of the reasons for dropping the parallel IEEE ports on the home computers in favour of the cheaper serial IEEE using DIN plugs). Together with the cost of the interface, this might make the use of the 'free' printer rather more expensive than it at first appears.

Drive size

I have got a Commodore 64 and I am looking for a disk drive. I don't like the 5¼" drives and prefer a 3½" drive (ie: like for the Amigas). Can you use a 3½" drive via an interface for the 64? If so how? Or where can I get more information on this?
Clement Chung,
Ipswich

There is a 3½" drive made for the C64 and C128 by Commodore; it is called the 1581 and is a comparatively new

arrival on the Commodore scene. It can be used without an interface and its main claim to fame is the nearly 800 Kbytes of storage as opposed to the miserly 170 Kbytes of the 1541.

However, rather like the 1001 drive mentioned in another answer, the disadvantage is that there is a little software available in this format. This means that its primary use is as a data drive, storing large databases etc, but not really for use as the only drive on a system. Like most non-standard drives, cartridges and copiers are unlikely to work correctly with it and you should check compatibility very carefully before taking the plunge.

The 1581 costs around £200 and if you have difficulty obtaining one, try Financial Systems Software on 0905-611536.



Shopping list

● For some time now, I have been looking around for a cheap printer for my 64. I am not concerned about amazing print quality, it just needs to be fairly clear and legible. Recently in CU I saw an ad which had a Commodore 560P printer. Please could you give me your opinion of this printer in terms of speed, reliability, value for money etc? If you wouldn't recommend this printer to me, what printer would you recommend and where could I obtain one?

My other questions are about the LOAD-IT system. The LOAD-IT casette deck itself is too expensive for me at £40, so could you tell me if there is a version I could fit myself? Or could I send my deck to LOAD-IT to get it adapted? Or would I be better off buying a tape head aligner as sold by Technical Developments or the Datacassette Doctor from Trilogic?

I would be very grateful if you could answer these questions for me.
Andrew White,
Bristol

The CBM 560P printer is only really useful if you have a fascination for supermarket till-receipts, since it uses about the same size paper. You don't say what you want to use the printer for, but nothing even remotely resembling the things people normally do with printers like program listings, letters, directory listings etc, could be carried out on such a tiny paper roll as used on the 560P. If you are after something that will produce lists of figures or calculations on the other hand, then perhaps it might just be suitable. About the only way of getting a printer even close to this sort of price is on the second hand market. There are also a growing number of computer auctions taking place around the country; these often have incredibly good bargains in printers and are worth looking at if you hear of one near you.

As for the LOAD-IT system, you can either Do-It-Yourself with their kit, which costs £9.95, or you can send your cassette deck to them with a cheque for £19.95 and they will do it for you. For further details, contact LOAD-IT, 35 Stretton Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 2RX (021–745 4970).

Communication

● I own a Commodore 64 and would be grateful for some information on the following.
1) By using a modem, could my 64 'communicate' with other computers of different makes and models or only 64s?
2) If so would any other equipment be necessary and how much would it cost?

I would be very grateful if you could also give me the same information on the Amiga A500 as I am thinking of upgrading.
Blain Stocking,
Gorseinon

If by 'communicate' you mean over telephone lines then you can talk to virtually any other computer which has a compatible modem. The only things you have to ensure are that such things as the 'baud rate', 'parity' and 'handshaking' are the same for both modems, but this is something that has to be done whatever the means of linking two computers together. Since you will be sending ASCII text over the phone for the most part it really doesn't matter what machine is on the other end.

What can't be done is to send programs over the link and then expect them to run on a different machine; only data and text are really 'portable' commodities. By using a modem you can also link into things like Micronet, Prestel and Telecom Gold, allowing you to have group 'conversations', use mailboxes for sending and receiving messages and getting information about a whole variety of topics.

The modem to buy depends very much on what you want to use it for. A simple 300/300 baud modem might be suitable for the local bulletin board or talking direct to a friend, but not much else. On the other hand, buying a 'quad rate' modem running from 300/300 to 2400/2400 and everything in between (costing at least £200 and possibly up to £700) is only necessary if you really need all its facilities. The best compromise is probably a 300/300 and 1200/75 dual-rate modem that will allow you to talk to Prestel/Micronet as well as bulletin boards. These cost around £100–£150 and if you are thinking of upgrading to the Amiga you should get one that does not plug directly into the C64.

The other vital thing you will need is suitable comms software to run the modem. This varies enormously in price depending on the facilities, so again make up your mind about possible uses before deciding.

Cobol

● Please can you help? I have an Amiga A500 and am desperately searching for a COBOL Compiler as I am studying COBOL for the City and Guilds. Does one exist for the Amiga? If not, does one exist which could be used with the PC Emulator that I have? Your help would be gratefully appreciated.
Neil Emmet,
Dublin

I very much regret that I have not come across a single COBOL compiler for the Amiga. I imagine there are two major reasons for this; firstly, there is no way a language like COBOL can make full use of the capabilities of a machine like the Amiga. Secondly, because COBOL is very much a business language, it has not really caught on with any machine that was not initially seen as being purely for business. Although there are COBOL compilers around now for the 64 and 128 these came along very late in the day when several hundreds of thousands of machines had been sold.

The one company who *might* be able to help is GREYMATTER (0364-53499); they keep stock of more compilers for more machines that anyone I know. I suspect that a PC emulation might be about the only route. However, the problem with PC emulation is that COBOL compilers tend to be rather memory hungry and this could prove to be a problem when trying to run the emulation program, with the COBOL compiler and the compiled program all vying for memory.

The final hurdle is getting a compiler in Amiga disk format, unless you have got a 5¼" IBM compatible drive hooked up as well. Lots of problems I'm afraid; not many solutions.

Tommy's Tips

THE LAST WORD

Blimey it's quiet. The only sound in the CU office is a distant scraping as Gary Penn picks his nose, a low tuneless hum as Nick Kelly composes another three minute meisterwerk and the farting of a fly on the windowpane (or is it Gary Williams upstairs?) It's so quiet the Ed's sneaked off on holiday to Turkey and the Last Word has slung a hammock over his desk. If only there was something to write about. If only the software industry suddenly remembered that it was supposed to publish games. Sigh...



◀ *Well it's hasta la vista to two CU men. Scrivo the Ad Man and Gaz (the ass-like genius) are off to the distant end of the room to produce a 16-bit mag. So long suckers . . .*

We could always make it up. OK here goes. Bruce Everiss is a Mormon missionary, Tim Chaney is an escaped Mexican bank robber and Telecomsoft Mirrorsoft and Psygnosis are all in a Triad. Wait a minute, the last one's true according to a press release we've just received. Quite what it means TLW hasn't got a clue. It simply says the three are preparing to join forces in the 16 bit market to produce a number of joint ventures under the name Triad. Which is so boring that we'll go back to making things up. Ocean's David Ward frequents the same massage parlour as Major Ron. There, that's better. Oh dear someone important says if we continue to make it up we'll be sued out of existence, so we'll stop and have a cup of tea instead. And a Terry's Chocolate Orange bar...

Good heavens there's more real news lurking under TLW's teapot ... Elite and US Gold are suing and countersuing each other. Litigation of monstrous proportions! Writ city! More work for m'learned friends as the two companies sling mud at one another over *Road Blasters* and *Overlander*. No, really this is true, this one. The row originally broke out over Titus' *Fire 'n' Forget* which, US G claimed was a copy of *Road Blasters*. Then they saw *Overlander* and flipped accusing Elite of our old friend plagiarism. Elite took offence at this suggestion and are suing for libel since they have documents which prove their game concept predates the appearance of *Road Blasters* (the coin-op) by some time. This, claim Elite, could mean they make more money from legal action than profit on the title. That of course will be for the judge to decide...

Geoff Brown has a plastic foot. Whoops we started to invent things again. In fact to come clean these are actual rumours that have at one time circulated the industry from a mischievous source known to TLW and were fed to C&VG's gossip hungry hack John Minson. Hey John, did you know they've taken the word gullible out of the dictionary ..?

Two people have just married after meeting in Micronet's *Shades* multi-user game. True of False? True, actually. Fancy marrying an old dragon ...

Mike Pattenden gave the order to blow the Iranian airliner out of the sky ... That one's a bluff, but the Big Ed's on his way in, so TLW better clear up all the empty beer cans and sweet wrappers from his desk and look busy.


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Plays a knockout frantic farce in the classroom, locker room and the high school cafeteria. Hip-zap, door attack, throw balls and pies . . . but can you make him hand his love letter to his girl-friend?
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RESCUE THE CAPTIVES! You are a highly trained combat machine. Your mission; infiltrate all four enemy Strategic Defence Installations – alone, against immeasurable odds.
Eight more deadly opponents to combat as you advance to become a black-belt master. Authentic fighting moves with 4 different locations.
Konami
Our hero has finally mastered the secret martial art "CHIN'S SHAO-LIN" but is trapped by triad gangs. With kicks and other secret powers, escape from and travel SHAO-LIN'S road to freedom!
NEMESIS
The planet Nemesis, is now under an all-out space attack beings from the sub-space star cluster of Bacterion. You will need all your courage and concentration to win. Get ready to blast off!
HYPER SPORTS
Continuing the challenge where 'TRACK and FIELD' left off. Archery, Skeet Shooting and Weight Lifting are just some of the featured events to test your skill and stamina.
You can almost feel the tension of the big match breaking through the screen . . . the expectant crowd is almost on top of you! You return the service with a Top-spin Backhand, then a Forehand Back-spin, the ball bounces high from your opponent's looping, defensive lob . . . SMASH! . . . a great shot opens the score . . .
PING PONG
JACKAL
Get into this and you'll never get out . . . The plan – codename JACKAL – is to drop a squad of 4 crack troops behind enemy lines. Rescue a group of prisoners and whilst under attack, deliver them to helipads. Their final objective is to knockout enemy headquarters. Simple eh?
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